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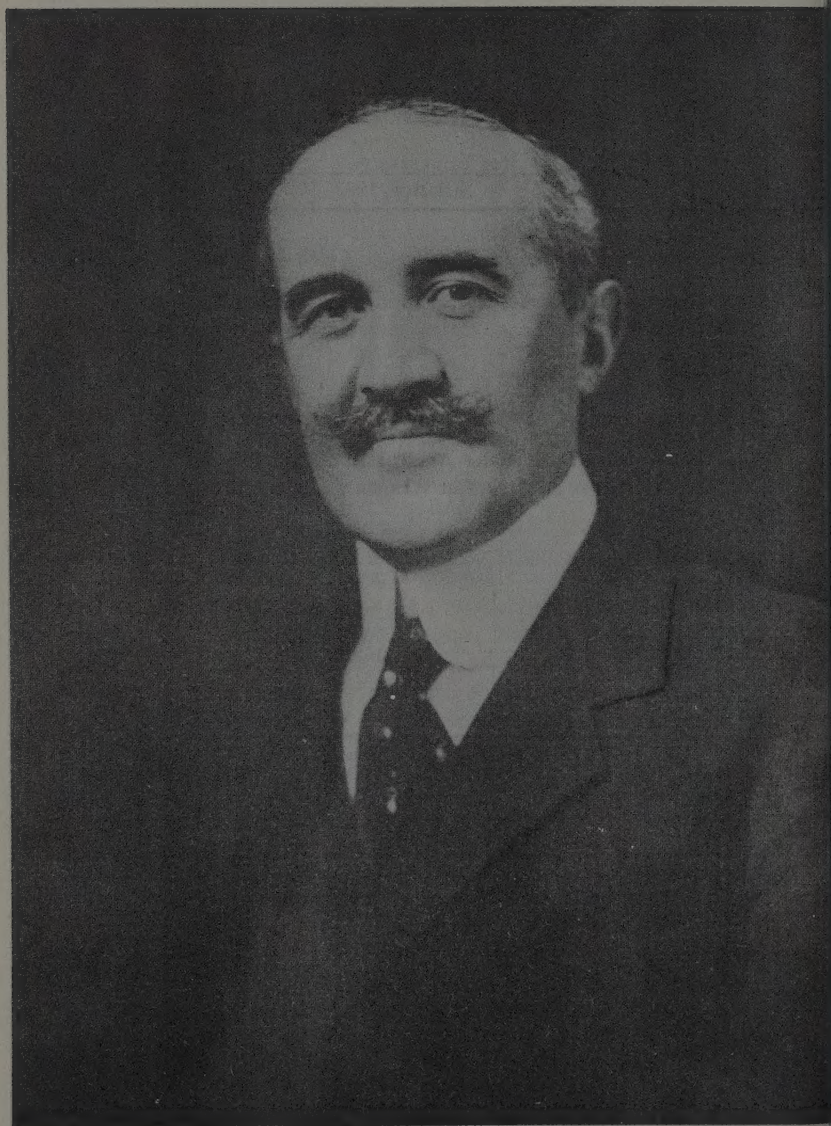
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ROBERT MATTESON JOHNSTON



# ROBERT MATTESON JOHNSTON

## 1867-1920

By COLONEL ARTHUR L. CONGER

The premature death of Professor Johnston, America's first critical military historian, was justly characterized by General Preston Brown as an irreparable loss to the American Army. Born in Paris in 1867, the son of an American physician, his earliest memories were of the siege of Paris in 1871 and the German occupation of that capital. His father organized the first American ambulance unit for service with the French Army. For his notable humanitarian work in caring for the wounded of both forces he had the distinction of being decorated by the German and the French governments. The tales of his father's experiences in the Franco-German War gave the boy an early predilection for things military and it was his life-long regret that a weak heart prevented his embarking on a military career.

Educated chiefly in England, at Eton and at Cambridge University, he pursued his studies on the Continent and in the United States which combined to give him breadth of view and depth of scholarship. His first serious historical research work was undertaken at Naples where he obtained access to the government archives, and two resulting publications, *The Roman Theocracy and the Republic, 1846-49* (1901) and *The Napoleonic Empire in Southern Italy* (1904) established his reputation for historical scholarship.

Returning to America, he accepted an Assistant Professorship at Harvard in 1908 and soon thereafter began to lecture and to write on topics in military history. Invited by the American Historical Association to organize a Military History Session for its Annual Meeting at Boston in 1911, he induced Theodore Roosevelt, several army officers designated by the War Department, and a few well known writers to conduct a round-table discussion on the organization of an historical section of our general staff and on other means of promoting the scientific study of military history. One result was the offer of a substantial cash prize by the Association for the best essay on a topic in military history submitted within a year. Soon thereafter Professor Johnston published his *Bull Run*, that notable pioneer critical work on our Civil War.

Appointed Chairman of the Committee on Military History he continued to organize sessions on this subject at the annual meetings of the Association. At the second of such meetings at Charleston in 1912, Franklin D. Roosevelt, then Assistant Secretary of the Navy, read an address.

The outbreak of the World War stimulated interest in military affairs to such an extent that Johnston believed the time ripe for a new magazine; 1915 gave birth to the *Military Historian & Economist*, a quarterly published by the Harvard University Press. Two years later came our own participation in the war and with it his great sacrifice. Offered a commission by the War

Department as Major to organize an historical section of the General Staff of the Army in France, he was flatly rejected by two military surgeons as unfit for foreign service; a third told him that with his weak heart he might never get to France and almost certainly would never get back, yet if he insisted, he would pass him. He felt the call of duty; there could be but one answer: "Come what may, I choose to go."

The subject of Johnston's work in creating the Historical Section of the A.E.F. General Staff is a separate story. He envisioned not only a fact-finding bureau but a current portrayal of events which should be an inspiration alike to the public at home and to the man at the front. However the prejudices of his superiors against the latter objective proved insurmountable with the result that the public and army had to content themselves with the pap supplied by the not specially qualified or well informed correspondents of newspapers for their information.

Johnston did live to return to America in the summer of 1919 and, realizing the futility of accomplishing anything of value in Washington, resigned from the Army and returned to resume his professorial work at Harvard. But the strain had been too great; in mid-winter after a brief illness the final call came.

Outside his manuscripts prepared with a view to official publication one book alone, *First Impressions*, tells, all too briefly, the story of the war as he saw it.

## THE INFLUENCE OF THE MEDICAL DEPARTMENT UPON CONFEDERATE WAR OPERATIONS\*

By COURTNEY ROBERT HALL

Students of American military history sometimes forget that the conflict of the 1860's was one of the greatest of modern wars; that it was, in fact, the greatest struggle of modern times, with the possible exception of the Napoleonic Wars, up to our own time. In the intensity of the conflict, the wide distribution of its operations, and its immense cost, it rivals even the operations ending at Waterloo. Battles raged over an area from Pennsylvania to Florida, from Washington City to the plains of Texas; some four million men took part in it. Estimates of its direct cost, incomplete at best, reach the figure of eight billion dollars.

Consequently, hundreds of cities and villages were destroyed and vast areas of the best agricultural land of North and South ravaged. Peaceful regions which had never known the havoc of war became positions of importance, and backwoods hamlets became clogged with hordes of wounded.<sup>1</sup> A

\*A paper read By Dr. Hall, Adelphi College, at the joint session of the American Historical Association and the American Military History Foundation, Chattanooga, December 27, 1935.



large general and monographic literature has informed us rather fully upon the military and political phases of the War, particularly from the Northern point of view, and recently scholars have begun to attack the associated social and economic problems. Yet from the Confederate side the story is far from complete, since the South lost the War. But prejudice can hardly account for all of this, for valuable Confederate dispatches were lost during the last two years of the War, particularly in the burning of Richmond in 1865. Our monumental publication, the *Official Records*,<sup>2</sup> contains but three volumes devoted exclusively to Confederate papers; likewise the volumes published by the United States Surgeon General deal mostly with Northern problems.

The disparity in numbers between the contestants, taken in connection with the vastly greater wealth and resources of the North, make clear that the problem of creating and supplying armies, perplexing enough to the North, was in the end a matter of desperation in the Confederacy. Yet for four years its military machine functioned; whipped into shape by an able officer personnel, it contested on more than even terms for two years all efforts to subjugate the new government. Chief among the problems which had to be faced by the Confederate staff officers, was that of securing adequate medical aid for their men. Especially difficult was this effort to a region without manufacturing facilities in great amount, and lacking the capital to develop the needed industries in time to win a victory.

On February 26, 1861, the Confederate government created by law a general staff for the army; there were to be an adjutant and inspector general, a quartermaster general, a commissary general, and a surgeon general, with their respective staffs. The tentative nature of this law is indicated by the fact that only ten surgeons were provided for, to assist the surgeon general, though another clause indicated that as many additional assistant surgeons as were later thought necessary by the War Department, could be added to that number.<sup>3</sup> As the head of this important department, President Davis designated Doctor Samuel Preston Moore, of Charleston, South Carolina. Born in 1813, Moore had graduated from the Medical College of South Carolina in 1834, and was next year appointed assistant surgeon in the United States Army, with the rank of captain. For twenty-six years, almost to the outbreak of the War, he performed service in a variety of difficult posts: in Mexico, in the lower Mississippi valley and in several western Army posts. For his Mexican War service, he was promoted to full surgeon, with the rank of major. When called to head the Confederate Medical service, he was practising medicine in Little Rock, Arkansas. His biographers, among them members of his own staff, have attested to his soldierly qualities, the strict discipline which he always maintained, and his modesty as to his own achievements. Likewise have they praised his ingenuity and energy in building up and maintaining a vast organization.<sup>4</sup>

The story of the achievements of Moore and his staff would extend this paper beyond its allotted length; how he assembled a corps of 2500 surgeons and assistant surgeons, in addition to about 100 naval surgeons; how he administered a vast network of hospitals, including one which was the largest military hospital in the history of warfare; how he secured supplies of drugs by smuggling them through the lines or by running them in through the blockade; how he prepared and caused others to prepare medical botanies and surgical guides for the use of medical men and set up laboratories and distilleries in the interest of the department; how he organized a society of military surgeons to circulate among all the staff the valuable information acquired, and established a journal for summarizing the progress of Confederate medical knowledge; how, most impressive of all, his department cared for some 3,000,000 cases, a number more than three times as great as the entire Confederate personnel, to say nothing of the 250,000 prisoners of war, who were generally hospital cases. From his inadequate headquarters at Richmond, he administered his scattered staff of medical men with the field armies and in the hospitals, together with a large number of matrons and nurses, hospital attendants, laboratory and distillery personnel. As regular routine, the officers at Richmond received and answered thousands of dispatches, some from the civil and military authorities at the capital, some from their agents in Europe or along the military frontier, others from the medical directors of the armies in the field and of the various military hospitals. New hospitals were opened, others were closed, supplies were requisitioned, medicines purchased and shipped, arguments carried on with the military men over hospital personnel and as to furloughs for convalescent soldiers. Such was something of what it meant, to a single department of the Confederacy, to wage a long war with a powerful foe. The President of the Confederacy said of their work: "It would be quite beyond my power to do justice to the skill and knowledge with which the medical corps performed their arduous task."<sup>5</sup>

Such was the problem and its difficulty. It is worth while inquiring somewhat more concretely what military effects were noticeable from this great achievement in organization which has been briefly described. Of course it is true that the medical department of the Confederacy was of far more importance than merely to hustle from the field of action the disabled men. In that, as in every modern army, the general physical welfare of the troops was mainly the care of the doctors; they oversaw the sanitary provisions and the water supply, and attended to the men's minor illnesses; many of the leading surgeons influenced, as staff members, the successive maneuvers of the detachment. Such routine matters alone were enough to keep them busy, even in the shrunken commands of Lee, Jackson or Bragg.

As it was the commanding officer's duty to lead a detachment into action, and to conduct it, if possible, to the military advantage of the Confederacy,



so it was the chief medical officer's grim and painful duty to clear up the battlefield. The engagement won or lost, he became the most important individual of all, for upon his coolness and the efficiency of himself and staff depended the success of pushing an advantage, or of accelerating a retreat. Sometimes it depended upon the medical men whether a group would ever again function as a military organization. Colonel Henderson has well shown how important to the success of Jackson in the Valley was the speed and dispatch of the men under Doctor McGuire, his chief surgeon.<sup>6</sup>

Equally important to the success of the military arm was the service performed behind the lines in the receiving hospitals and in the general hospitals to which the badly wounded and the dangerously ill eventually came. If these men could be returned to the front by a quick hospitalization, the Confederate cause would be, by that much, assisted. When we realize that the War was fought on the Southern side, largely by volunteers, the importance of hospital replacements becomes more evident. To illustrate what success the Confederacy attained in this matter, let us examine briefly the organization set up on Chimborazo Hill, near Richmond.

This hospital, one of some twenty-three maintained in or near Richmond, was not only the largest in the Confederacy, but exceeded in size any in the history of warfare to that time. It contained 150 well-ventilated single-story buildings, each measuring one hundred by thirty feet, arranged in five divisions, to serve the respective needs of the men from Virginia, Georgia, Alabama and the Carolinas. Each building formed a ward and contained from forty to sixty beds. Between the pavilions were neat alleys and streets, and a staff of one hundred surgeons and nurses was in attendance. The entire organization, with its patients, medical men, nurses and guards, formed a military post under the command of the hospital director, Dr. James McCaw. Professional apothecaries were in attendance; there was a good water supply and sewage system; there were five ice houses and a bath house on the grounds. Furniture for the hospital was made in several converted tobacco factories nearby, and a loyal Virginian, Mr. Stearns, devoted the produce of his large dairy farm to the soldiers' needs. On the James River and the Kanawha Canal plied the Chimborazo trading packet, bartering in Richmond, Lynchburg and Lexington for supplies. This fine organization functioned for three and one-half years, treated 77,000 patients and returned more than 70,000 of them either to their homes or to the front.<sup>7</sup>

Such was the story, in lesser degree, in most of the other hospitals in Richmond and elsewhere: in that supported by Sally Tompkins, the only female commissioned officer in the Confederacy; in Howard's Grove Hospital; in the Winder Hospital; in General Hospital No. 1; in the Charlottesville General Hospital, which utilized the buildings and many of the faculty of the University of Virginia; in the great Tishomingo Hospital at Corinth, which

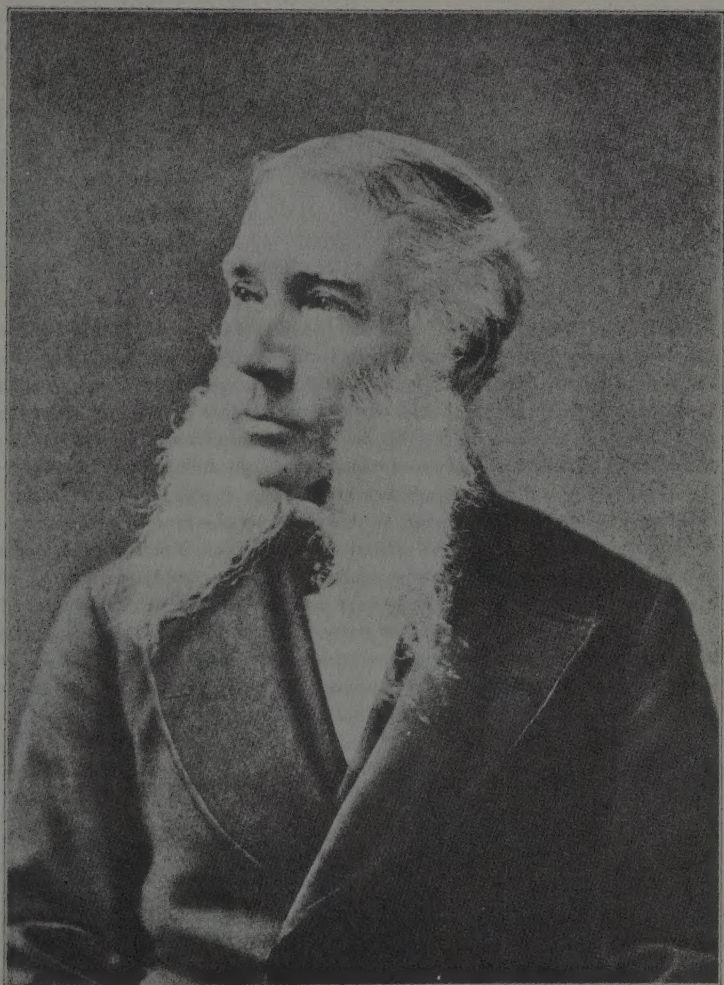
utilized the large hotel of that name—in these and many others, good surgery was performed, lives were saved, and man power trickled in a never-ending stream back to the gaunt and battle-scarred regiments of the leaders.

Hospital conditions were naturally better in Richmond than in other centers, for it was near staff headquarters, and had the advantage of better transportation facilities than most places. The Winder Hospital compared very favorably in size and general facilities with that at Chimborazo, for it had a capacity of 4,800 patients, covered 125 acres, and also had its own ice houses, dairy and bakery. The production of the latter was so great that excess bread was sold to the prisoners at Belle Isle and Libby. Though no such organizations as the Sanitary Commission existed in the South, yet a number of smaller ones like the Georgia Relief and Hospital Association functioned well. The official sources and diaries of the period abound with tributes to the unselfish women of all classes for their aid to the sick and wounded.<sup>8</sup> The Confederate Congress voted large appropriations to the work of the hospitals, one such, in its appropriation bill of May 1, 1863, being the largest single item on the list.<sup>9</sup>

It is quite true that on certain occasions the medical facilities broke down completely. Such was the case after Lee's repulse at Malvern Hill, and it was true in the other heavy campaigns. But it is likely that no blame should be attached to the medical staff members for this condition. Even though Doctor Guild, medical director of Lee's Army, found himself after the above battle with a mass of wounded, both Federal and his own men, whom he could not move; and even though he was without anæsthetics and drugs and was not in communication with the headquarters in Richmond, these were the results of a terrific week of slaughter and of such rapid maneuver as to confuse the best of staff officers. Despite the disorganization of the department, General Lee commended Guild and many of his subordinates in general orders for their conduct during the Seven Days.<sup>10</sup> That there was careful planning to avoid a repetition of this condition is evident in the care with which Doctor Guild worked out a system of receiving hospitals along the Orange and Alexandria Railroad in June, 1863, preparatory to the campaign about to be fought in the North. Difficulties of transportation, however, militated against the best care of the wounded in that campaign, for General Lee decided that it was impossible to carry into Northern territory hospital units like the Richmond Ambulance Corps.<sup>11</sup>

The military code of the time seemed to demand the presence upon the battlefield of general officers, and the casualties among them were exceedingly high; battle wounds disposed of Albert Sidney Johnston, J. E. B. Stuart, and Stonewall Jackson, and came very near cutting off the career of Joseph E. Johnston, ranking field officer in the first part of the War, and that of General Longstreet, Lee's best corps commander after Jackson's death. The narrow





SAMUEL PRESTON MOORE  
SURGEON-GENERAL OF THE CONFEDERACY

*Photographic History of the Civil War, copyrighted by Review of Reviews*

escapes of Lee himself, and of President Davis, who often galloped out from the city to inspect an engagement, are known to all. With the code of honor of a Southern gentleman, even a good medical department was frequently powerless to deal. Had not Jackson and his staff been mistaken for Federal cavalry, as they galloped out in the dusk of Chancellorsville to reconstitute the Confederate lines, and furthermore, had not one of Jackson's stretcher bearers been struck down, thus giving the General further painful injuries, how different a story might be the later history of the War! As it was, he lingered a week, after expert surgery, to succumb finally from pleuro-pneumonia of the right side. On such slender threads did the success of the Confederacy depend; all the medical men could do, in such cases, was to labor to offset the damage which had already, unfortunately, been done.<sup>12</sup>

As in most modern wars, disease was the most formidable enemy with which the Confederate Army had to contend. In the Army of Northern Virginia, for example, each man suffered from, on the average, three reported illnesses from July, 1861 to March, 1862, while of the 77,000 patients received during the War at Chimborazo, 50,000, or nearly two-thirds, were sick and not wounded. The men suffered from malaria, typhoid, tuberculosis, smallpox and the measles. A badly balanced diet swelled the ranks of scurvy cases, and diseases of the throat and lungs appeared when the troops moved into cold climates or when they were imprisoned in the bleak Northern concentration camps. Diarrhoea, colic and indigestion ravaged the camps, particularly where a good water supply was lacking, or where the medical order to discard the fry pan for the stew pan was not enforced. The physicians worked frantically to offset these bad conditions; they sought supplies of food which would help the men combat the scurvy, as vinegar and potatoes; detachments of men were sent to search the woods to gather sassafras, wild onions, artichokes and other anti-scorbutics.

Upon the ability of the medical department, wrote Doctor Guild in January, 1863, to combat dietary insufficiency, might depend the success or failure of Lee's next campaign. With this conclusion General Lee was in accord; in his letter to Secretary Seddon in April, 1863, he stated that the daily ration of his men was sufficient only to keep them alive and was useless in preparing them for heavier exertions. Connected with malnutrition in the army were the efforts of the Surgeon General to circulate guide books among his staff to assist them to secure native foods and medicines of tonic value. So too, did the seven laboratories set up to prepare medicines for the medical staff, combat this evil. Great scientific skill was utilized in conducting these units, the laboratory at Charleston being under the direction of the famous Le Conte brothers. The distilleries which the medical department operated to provide an alcoholic medium for new medicines as well as to manufacture whiskey for hospital use,



were opposed by several of the states, there being a feeling that too much of the small grain supply was thus consumed.

In addition to conducting his Association of Army and Navy Surgeons, and his *Confederate States Medical and Surgical Journal*, the valiant Doctor Moore found time to project several elaborate studies of disease as it existed in the Confederacy. One such study, that of Doctor Jones on hospital gangrene, occupied over 400 pages in the *Surgical Memoirs of the Sanitary Commission*, a Northern publication. The problem of the prisoners and their diseases was the subject of another exhaustive study by the department. Complaints in great number by Federal prisoners were dealt with, often personally, by the Surgeon General, and such information as he could gather from paroled surgeons as to the condition of Confederates in Northern prisons, he carefully forwarded to his superiors for use in their negotiations with the North.<sup>13</sup>

Occasionally the demands of the department ran counter to, or at least seemed to, the urgent military needs of the moment. Such was the case when Doctor Moore or his subordinates felt it wise to break the rules regarding trading with the enemy, for the purpose of securing opiates or medical supplies through the lines. The opposition of the military and legal authorities to this was natural, but the willingness of the department to put itself in a false position with its own superiors often saved lives and prevented epidemics. Such was also the case when the medical and the military authorities disagreed as to how many or which men could be conveniently spared from service in the numerous department establishments for more active service. Even General Lee attacked the department sharply on this matter and received from the Surgeon General an equally sharp rejoinder.<sup>14</sup>

But all such difficulties are no doubt minor ones when we consider the scope of the conflict and the inexperience of the officials of the Confederacy in conducting war on a large scale. From a considerable mass of information we will gain the impression that the medical department functioned well, when we take into account its scanty means. Without the strenuous, almost desperate endeavors of Moore and his doctors and nurses no such resistance as was put forth would have been possible. If, as has been well-said, Jackson was the strong right arm of the high command in the Confederacy, and Jeb Stuart the keen eye of its military intelligence, may we not suggest that the medical department provided the means and skill by which not merely the arms and the eyes, but the entire Confederate organism continued to function?

#### Notes

1. T. L. Livermore, *Numbers and Losses in the Civil War in America*, *passim*; F. Phisterer, *Statistical Record of the Armies of the United States*, 10; R. H. McKim, *The Numerical Strength of the Confederate Army*, 21; Nicolay and Hay, *Abraham Lincoln*, X, 339. A longer version of this subject, by the author of this paper, occu-

- pies a special Confederate number of *Medical Life*, September, 1935, 443-508. This it is intended will be shortly expanded into a volume upon American military medicine.
2. *The War of the Rebellion: a Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies*. Hereinafter referred to as *O.R.*
  3. *O.R.* Series IV, Vol. I, 114-115.
  4. The actual date of Moore's appointment is somewhat doubtful. One writer states it as November 7, 1861, following the resignation of a temporary incumbent, Dr. De Leon; but as early as July 30 of the same year Dr. Moore was designated in dispatches as "acting surgeon-general" and in a summary of the principal officers of the Confederate War Department his appointment is stated to have been March 16, 1861 and no mention is made of any predecessors. *O. R.*, Series IV, Vol. I, 508, 1176. On Moore's personality, see, E. R. Wiese, "Samuel Preston Moore," in *So. Med. Jour.*, XXIII, 916-923; S. E. Lewis, "Doctor Samuel P. Moore," *So. Hist. Soc. Papers*, XXIX, 278; *Richmond Times-Dispatch*, May 15, 1910.
  5. J. Davis, *The Rise and Fall of the Confederate Government*, I, 310; W.B. Blanton, *Medicine in Virginia in the Nineteenth Century*, 272-275; *The Medical and Surgical History of the War of the Rebellion*, Vol. II, Part I, xxi; *O.R.*, Series I, Vol. XXXIII, Part I, 1196-1197; *ibid.*, Vol. XVII, Part II, 749; *ibid.*, Vol. LII, Part II, 532; Series III, Vol. III, 154; Series IV, Vol. I, 114-115, 209-212, 408-409, 601-602, 604-605, 794, 1041, 1095-1097; S. P. Moore, *Resources of the Confederacy in February, 1865*; F. P. Porcher, *Resources of the Southern Fields and Forests*; S. P. Moore, *Standard Supply Table of the Indigenous Remedies for Field Service*; E. R. Wiese, *op. cit.*, 917-920; many items in the Confederate Museum, Richmond, Virginia.
  6. W. B. Blanton, *op. cit.*, 277, 280, 281-283, 287; G. F. R. Henderson, *Stonewall Jackson and the American Civil War*, I, 260-261; *O.R.*, Series I, Vol. II, Part II, 387, 633-634; *ibid.*, Vol. V, 389; Series IV, Vol. I, 369-373, 1151.
  7. W. B. Blanton, *op. cit.*, 301-302; E. R. Wiese, *op. cit.*, 920; J. R. Gildersleeve, *History of Chimborazo*, *passim*.
  8. J. F. Rhodes, *History of the United States . . .*, V, 464-465; Resolution of the Confederate Congress, *Statutes at Large*, April 11, 1862; Kate Cumming, *A Journal of Hospital Life in the Confederate Army of Tennessee*; Mathew P. Andrews (compiler), *The Women of the South in War Times*; W. B. Blanton, *op. cit.*, 302-308.
  9. *Confederate Statutes at Large*, Provisional Congress, 38, 39, 46, 115; *ibid.*, First Congress, 63-64, 95, 139.
  10. *O.R.*, Series I, Vol. II, Part I, 633-634; *ibid.* Part II, 537.
  11. W. B. Blanton, *op. cit.*, 281, 282-283.
  12. G. F. R. Henderson, *op. cit.*, II, 450 *et seq.*; W. B. Blanton, *op. cit.*, xiii; D. S. Freeman, *R. E. Lee*, II, 533, *et. seq.*; Hunter McGuire, "Account of the Wounding and Death of General Jackson," *Richmond Medical Journal*, May, 1866.
  13. *O. R.*, Series I, Vol. XXV, Part II, 687, 744-745; J. B. McMaster, *A History of the People of the United States*, IX, 335-336; J. W. Jones, *Treatment of Prisoners in the War between the States*, 156-158; same author, *Medical and Surgical Memoirs*, II, 395-419; *O.R.*, Series I, Vol. XXI, 1084-1085; *ibid.*, Series II, Vol. VII, 557; *ibid.*, Vol. III, 698; *ibid.*, Vol. IV, 782-783; *ibid.*, Vol. VI, 181, *ibid.*, Vol. VII, 499.
  14. *O.R.*, Series I, Vol. XXXIII, Part I, 1196-1198; *ibid.*, Vol. LII, Part II, 532; S. P. Moore, *Resources of the Confederacy in February, 1865*.



## THE DUEL ON THE WAR BONNET

BY DON RUSSELL

Few figures in American history have been built by publicity into such heroic proportions as that of William F. Cody, who as Buffalo Bill became the prototype of the great American Wild West. Equally few figures, on the other hand, have been the objects of such determined attack upon the part of those professionally iconoclastic writers whose pose it is to judge a man's worth in inverse proportion to his prominence. By some of his admirers it has been claimed that Buffalo Bill killed as many Indians as any other white man; yet certain critics have maintained, chiefly, perhaps, through jealousy, that he never killed an Indian in his life. The fact is that while neither of these extremes can be substantiated, it is impossible to determine at what point between them lies the whole truth. However, from the colorful tapestry of heroism adroitly fabricated by Cody's press-agents it is possible to single out at least this one event which possessed perhaps even more of the elements of drama on the day it occurred than it has possessed in its garish retellings in the dime novel and on the stage.

The duel of Buffalo Bill and Yellow Hand is one of the great American legends and in common with the other Cody hero tales it is periodically attacked as being pure myth. Indeed, investigation does readily show that the duel idea has been greatly exaggerated. Nevertheless there seems to be ample evidence that he did kill an Indian that day, and, in all probability, took his scalp as well. The incident presents a curious, and perhaps a not entirely coincidental parallel to the deeds Cody had been portraying on the stage for more than three years previous to that time. It presents also the first real evidence of his unquestionably great talents for showmanship.

Let us glance for a moment at Cody's background. In 1868, at only twenty-two years of age, he was already a buffalo-hunter and guide of considerable repute. In that year he came to the attention of General Sheridan by an heroic ride of three hundred and fifty miles through hostile Indian country in less than sixty hours. "Such an exhibition of endurance and courage," said General Sheridan in his memoirs, "was more than enough to convince me that his services would be extremely valuable in the campaign, so I retained him at Fort Hays until the battalion of the Fifth Cavalry arrived, and then made him chief of scouts for that regiment." That position was retained by Buffalo Bill until the Fifth was moved to Arizona in 1871. During the following year he engaged in a variety of occupations, the last of which was to affect his entire career. A short time before this he had met Ned Buntline, prolific writer of dime novels. Buntline was the first to see the possibilities in Cody as "Buffalo Bill" and late in 1872 persuaded him to go on the stage. While his ability as an actor may be somewhat questionable, the realism of the performance kept the shows a success until the spring of 1876, when the death of his son appears to have caused Cody to lose much of his zest for theatrical life. It appears possible that he had already received offers to return to the army as a scout, and, at all events, in a few weeks he closed his show at Wilming-

ton, Delaware, and took a midnight train for the West. Having heard that the Fifth Cavalry had taken the field, he joined that regiment at Cheyenne four days later.

The broad outlines of the Sioux War of 1876 are fairly well known. The Indians, under Chiefs Crazy Horse and Gall, had gone on the warpath, and three columns of regular troops commanded by Generals Gibbon, Terry and Crook, were to converge on the Sioux country during the early summer. Terry's column, including General Custer's Seventh Cavalry, left Fort Abraham Lincoln, Dakota Territory, May 17, later joining Gibbon on the Yellowstone. Crook left Fort Fetterman May 26.

Early in June eight troops of the Fifth Cavalry were assembled from various posts in Kansas, and on June 22, under command of its lieutenant colonel, Brevet Major General Eugene A. Carr, the Fifth was sent out to watch the trails leading northward from the Red Cloud and the Spotted Tail reservations with the purpose of preventing these Indians from joining Sitting Bull's assembly. At this time it was not known to Carr that Crook had fought the Sioux on the Rosebud June 17, and had fallen back to Goose Creek, for no news had come to the Fifth Cavalry of the movements of the other columns. The destruction of Custer with five troops of his regiment on the Little Big Horn came June 25, just three days after the Fifth Cavalry took the field.

On the same day as Custer's defeat the Fifth Cavalry struck the trail it sought along the valley of the Mini Pusa, South Fork of the Cheyenne River.<sup>1</sup> Its new colonel, Wesley Merritt, who had been made a brevet major general for distinguished services in the Civil War joined it there on July 1, the very day of his commission—just how he accomplished this very considerable feat is nowhere explained. He sent out scouting parties in various directions, and on July 3, troops I and K were successful in sighting a small band of Indians but were unable to catch up with them even after a full day's chase. This contact, however, had advertised the presence of the regiment to the Indians and the trap was sprung. Merritt ordered a retreat to the head of Sage Creek, which he reached July 6, and sent couriers in to Fort Laramie for further instructions. The next day news of the Custer disaster finally arrived.

The regiment remained in camp awaiting orders until July 10, when it was ordered to return to Fort Laramie, stock fully with supplies, and then march by way of Fort Fetterman to join General Crook. At the same time, from Camp Robinson, came news that the Southern Cheyennes at the Red Cloud and Spotted Tail Agencies were preparing to take the warpath. However, the regiment marched toward Fort Laramie until July 14, while Major T. H. Stanton, a paymaster and personal representative of Lieutenant General Phillip H. Sheridan in the field, was sent in to Camp Robinson to investigate the rumors of trouble there.

The Fifth Cavalry, as encamped on Rawhide Creek that night, had present Regimental Headquarters and Companies A, B, D, G, I, K and M. With the command rode a small group of scouts including Cody, as chief, Tait, Jona-







Ned Buntline, Cody and Texas Jack as "Scouts of the Prairie"  
in Buntline's play of that name.



thon White, better-known as "Buffalo Chips," and Baptiste Garnier, a French-Indian called "Little Bat."<sup>2</sup> Company C had been detached that day to watch the Niobrara crossing of the trail between Forts Laramie and Robinson.<sup>3</sup> At noon next day Major Stanton returned with the report that some eight hundred Southern Cheyennes would leave the Red Cloud Agency early July 16, the following morning.

General Merritt, it will be recalled, had orders to join Crook at once, but the regiment for nearly a month had been anticipating the very danger that it now confronted. His decision to meet the problem at hand was made immediately. To have marched directly on Camp Robinson and the agency would doubtless have resulted in driving out the Indians. He determined instead to cut the trail in advance of the Cheyennes; to lay another ambush for them. This stratagem made necessary a march around the two sides of a triangle, instead of across its hypotenuse. The distance, eighty-five miles, was made in thirty-one hours. The column started out at 1:30 P.M., July 15, and its goal, the point at which the trail crossed War Bonnet Creek, was reached soon after 8 P.M. the next evening.<sup>4</sup> This was the first of Merritt's celebrated "lightning marches" with the Fifth.

One of the remarkable feats of this march was the performance of the wagon train commanded by Lieutenant W. P. Hall, the regimental quartermaster, later Adjutant General of the Army. Merritt had instructed Hall to make the best time he could, not expecting that the wagons could keep up with the troops. At 10 P.M. on the first night the regiment halted at Running Water after a march of thirty-five miles, and only two hours later the wagon train rolled in. When the troopers were aroused at 3 A.M. they found breakfast awaiting them before their start at dawn on the final fifty-mile dash.

Before daybreak on the morning of July 17, after the Fifth had been bivouacked for the night on the banks of the War Bonnet, Lieutenant Charles King, of Company K, was detailed to establish an outpost towards the southeast, the direction from which the Cheyennes were expected.<sup>5</sup> The position taken by Lieutenant King as soon as the first streaks of daylight began to appear is described by him as having been a little conical mound at the foot of a wave of prairie which descended gradually from the southeast while to the rear rose the line of bluffs which marked the tortuous course of the stream. He goes on to state that from the southward not even an Indian eye could tell that close under those bluffs seven veteran companies of cavalry were crouching, ready for a spring. King was accompanied by Corporal Wilkinson, who was, at 4.30 A.M., the first to sight Indians along the ridge lying to the southeast. During the next half-hour a half-dozen parties were seen in that direction, at two or three miles distance. These Indians very apparently were concentrating their attention upon something to the westward, making no attempt at concealment from the direction in which the cavalry regiment lay in ambush.

Merritt had been notified immediately, and he arrived at 5:15 A.M. With him were General Carr and two or three staff officers, including Lieutenant

William C. Forbush, adjutant of the regiment and Lieutenant J. Haydon Pardee of the 23rd Infantry, an aide-de-camp. It seems important to identify clearly as many as possible of those present at this stage, because of numerous self-styled eye-witnesses who have since appeared. The picket was entirely from Company K; Sergeant Schreiber was sergeant of the guard. Among several other officers who came forward to look over the ground, later rejoining their troops, was Captain Samuel S. Sumner, commanding Company D. The presence of Cody, who had just ridden in from a scout, was, of course, required.

Not far away was another eye-witness of the entire action. Chris Madsen, a trooper of Company A, assigned, in his capacity as signalman, to be a connecting link between the pickets and headquarters had spent the night, with signal flag and torch ready, on the top of a neighboring butte. About day-break, according to an account which he has recently published, Cody came in from a scouting trip, "directly to my post and told me to notify the command that he had been close enough to the Indian camp to see them preparing to move. However, he hastened to camp, and before the signalman [there] had time to make his report, he [Cody] was at Merritt's headquarters, and made his report personally."<sup>6</sup> It must have been within a few minutes after this incident that the Indians first came within sight of the outpost.

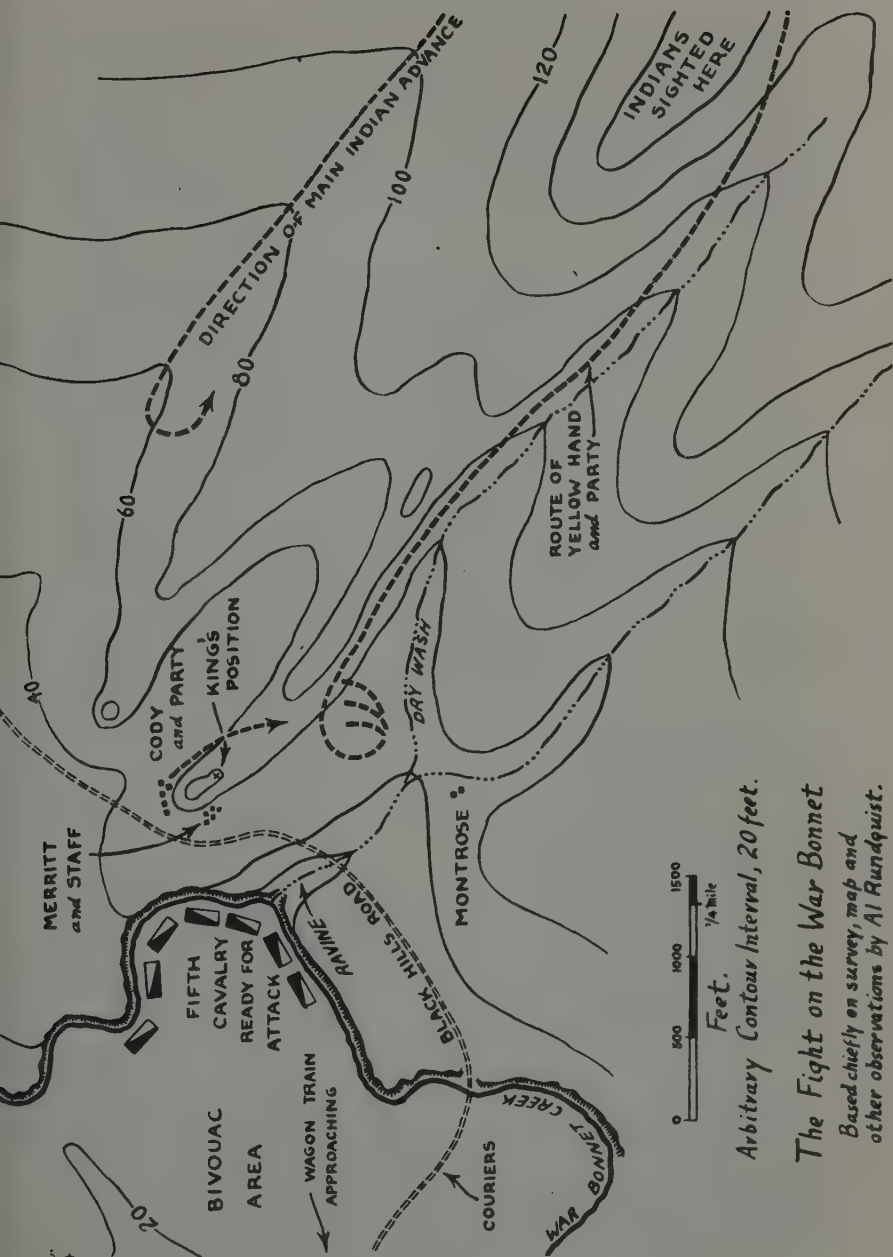
Soon the previously noted preoccupation of the Indians was explained by the appearance, a little to the westward, of the white tops of army wagons. Lieutenant Hall, by travelling all night, had nearly caught up with the regiment. This alone could have caused no perturbation, for Hall had two companies of infantry concealed in the wagons, and there seems no doubt that this train guard would have given the Indians an unpleasant surprise had they made an attack. Meanwhile, the main body of cavalry who had been having coffee, were immediately ordered by Merritt to saddle up and wait in a close mass under the bluffs.

Cody, who had remained at the observation point, was the first to notice an unusual amount of activity among the Cheyennes. This soon was accounted for by a careful search along the Black Hills trail where two couriers were seen to be approaching in advance of the wagon train. Later it was learned that they were Troopers Anderson and Keith of Company C, which, it will be recalled, had been sent to the Niobrara crossing of the Camp Robinson trail, bringing dispatches to Merritt, having ridden some twenty-five miles farther than the regiment during its "lightning march."<sup>7</sup>

A group of perhaps seven Indians was advancing down the ravine, intent upon cutting off the two couriers. In order to reach them the Cheyennes had to pass close under the hill from which King was watching. Buffalo Bill first recognized and seized this fortuitous opportunity.

"By jove! General, now's our chance," he exclaimed. "Let our party mount here, and we can cut those fellows off!"<sup>8</sup>

"Up with you then," ordered Merritt. "Stay where you are, King. Watch



Arbitrary Contour Interval, 20 feet.

## The Fight on the War Bonnet

Based chiefly on survey, map and other observations by Al Rundquist.



them until they are close under you; then give the word. Come down, every other man of you."

King thus was left alone on his hilltop to give the signal for the rescue. Cody, since he had conceived the plan, was given the honour of leading the party, which consisted, besides himself, of the two scouts, Tait and White, and five or six private troopers. Adjutant Forbush and Lieutenant Pardee were crouched out of sight on the slope, ready to pass along the signal, while Sergeant Schreiber and Corporal Wilkinson remained near-by.

His audience was small, even though it burned with the enthusiasm of intimate concern; yet Buffalo Bill never had been granted by the artifice of the stage a more spectacular setting for deeds of heroism than the chance of actual warfare furnished him at that moment. This happy chance was by no means left unfriended by Bill's experience of the theatre, however, for he was gloriously dressed for the part. While the rest of the regiment was in its working-clothes of buckskin or blue flannel, Buffalo Bill shone forth in one of his stage costumes—a brilliant Mexican *vaquero* outfit of black velvet slashed with scarlet and trimmed with silver buttons and lace, just the sort of thing which he had been persuading Eastern audiences was the regular garb of the well-dressed scout of the prairies. He was destined to legitimise his myth that day.

Cody's resplendence was fittingly matched by that of his opponents, the Cheyennes. They approached, with the sun flashing from polished armlets and lance heads, with gaily painted rawhide shields, and with the wind streaming their long war bonnets out behind them. Intent on getting the scalps of the two couriers, they failed to observe peering over the hillcrest, the head of King and his binoculars; the only things possibly visible to them in that still-peaceful landscape.

"All ready, general?"

"All ready, King. Give the word when you like."

King waited until he could hear the panting of the ponies, the Cheyennes being less than a hundred yards away.

"Now, lads, in with you."

Cody, with a cheer, led forth his little band against the Indians' flank. Merritt, Wilkinson, and others ran up the slope to King's vantage-point, there to watch the action. For a moment both parties were out of view. Two shots were heard. Suddenly Corporal Wilkenon pulled at the general's sleeve excitedly, pointing. There a single Indian, following the original party, had halted, trying to make out what was going on.

"Shall I fire?" Wilkinson asked. Merritt assented, and at the shot the Indian swung down in his saddle, sending an answering shot whistling past the general's ear, fired, King believed, from under the horse's neck. Many years later Wilkinson expressed the opinion that he, not Cody, had shot Yellow Hand. King, however, has stated that this was the only shot fired by Wilkinson in the action, and that it was a miss.

Just as these shots were fired, King saw the main body of the Indians rushing down the ravine, and appearing by scores all along the ridge. Upon

his shout of warning, Merritt quickly ordered the first company to be sent up and sprang to his saddle, followed by his staff officers. That first company was K, King's troop, commanded by Captain Julius W. Mason, and King rushed back to mount his horse and join his company. The horse had broken away, and King was perhaps forty-five seconds in running him down, but despite these difficulties he mounted in time to join Company K as it dashed by, and it was only a moment later that he charged with them past Cody, standing over the body of the Indian chief he had killed, waving the handsome war bonnet and shouting.

The actions of the men on the hill seem clear enough. What happened there on the prairie, in the swirling dust and in the tense excitement of the fight is not so easily apparent. Nevertheless, basing our conclusions on the accounts of King and of two soldiers who were in the charge with Buffalo Bill, we can, to some degree, reconstruct the action. Cody and the lone Cheyenne doubtless saw each other at about the same moment. It seems certain at least that they fired simultaneously, Cody's shot piercing the Indian's leg and his pony's heart. The scout was not hit but at almost the same instant his horse stepped into a gopher hole and threw him. He got up, recovered his rifle, and fired again, killing the Indian who was lying wounded on the ground.<sup>9</sup> It seems reasonable to assume that they were then only a short distance apart, perhaps not over fifty feet. Cody appears to have run forward, seen that the Cheyenne really was dead and, for the benefit of the oncoming troopers, raised the Indian's war bonnet into the air with—as he always told the story—the cry "*The first scalp for Custer!*" The soldiers responded with cheers as they galloped past.

Whether or not Cody's own words gave him the idea, it seems clear that he shortly thereafter drew his knife and scalped the Indian. King has positively stated that Cody could not, as it was claimed later, have taken the scalp in the short space of time that had elapsed before the cavalrymen rode past. Nevertheless, the signalman, Madsen, still at his post on the butte, saw the scalp being taken. Later, in passing close to the dead Cheyenne, he confirmed this to himself. A Sergeant Hamilton, of Summer's company, stopping near the body to adjust his saddle, also saw that the scalp was gone.<sup>6</sup>

The Indian was identified as Hay-o-wei, a young Cheyenne leader. His name was translated at the time by "Little Bat," the half-breed scout, as meaning yellow hand, but since then other authorities have stated that it actually meant yellow hair, no doubt referring to some scalp he had taken, probably that of a white woman.

As Company K topped the ridge, the Indians fired a scattering volley, but when they saw the gray horse troop, B, under Captain Robert H. Montgomery, about sixty yards to the right rear, and I, Brevet Lieutenant Colonel Sanford C. Kellogg's company, coming front into line at the gallop at about the same distance to the left rear, they wheeled and scattered. The troops advanced cautiously in open order to the ridge, but after it was gained they

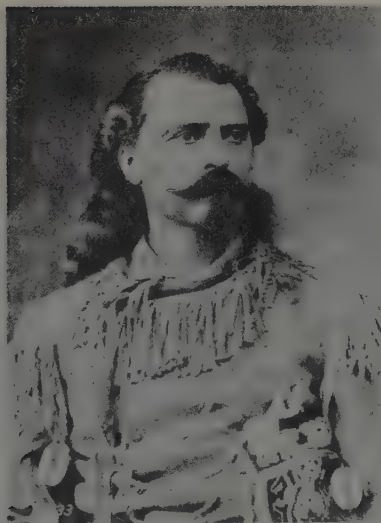
saw the Cheyennes unmistakably fleeing in all directions. The regiment pursued them for thirty-five miles back to the reservation, but were unable to catch up with any of them. At the agency it was impossible to distinguish which Indians had been on the warpath, attempting to reach Sitting Bull, and which had remained friendly, so no steps were taken to punish the party. As a result of this action on the War Bonnet the Southern Cheyennes took the warpath no more that summer. From Camp Robinson Merritt marched his regiment on to Fort Fetterman, by way of Fort Laramie, as ordered, but his arrival was about a week later than had been expected and quite naturally General Crook was not much pleased. However, he appears to have taken no action in the matter and perhaps for this reason Merritt never made a formal report of the fight.<sup>10</sup>

It would be somewhat boresome and of small value to give here very many examples of the exaggerated and conflicting yarns that grew out of this event, even could our space permit such a discussion. It might be well, however, to trace some of their earlier developments. When Cody reached the Red Cloud Agency he wrote a letter to his wife containing an account of the fight. Of all his stories of the incident—and there were many—this was, perhaps, the one of the most genuine worth. "We have come in here for rations," he wrote. "We have had a fight. I killed Yellow Hand, a Cheyenne chief in a single-handed fight. You will no doubt hear of it through the papers. I am going as soon as I reach Fort Laramie the place we are heading for now [to] send the war bonnet, shield, bridle, whip, arms and his scalp to Kerngood to put up in his window. I will write Kerngood to bring it up to the house so you can show it to the neighbors . . . My health is not very good. I have worked myself to death. Although I have shot at lots of Indians I have only one scalp I can call my own; that fellow I fought single-handed in sight of our command and the cheer that went up when he fell was deafening . . ." <sup>11</sup>

He does not yet describe the encounter as a duel, but his account does confirm the fact that he took the scalp. The letter also indicates that Cody already had an eye to publicity, for the story, however slightly, is beginning to grow.

On his arrival at Fort Laramie on July 21, Cody found a wire from James Gordon Bennett asking for an account of the fight. He asked King to write this for him and King composed what he later referred to as "a brief telegraphic story, say one-eighth of a column."<sup>12</sup> He read it over to Cody who suggested no changes at the time, though King recalled the scout's remarking "It's fine, only - - -", and then saying no more. King, oddly enough, did not read the printed account until 1929, which was, perhaps, as well, for the *New York Herald* expanded the story to nearly a column, and, it would seem, made a few alterations. Under the subhead "Cody Kills Yellow Hand" this contemporary account tells how Buffalo Bill and the little party from the outpost "sprung from their horses and met the daring charge with a volley. Yellow Hand, a young Cheyenne brave, came foremost, singling out Bill as a foeman worthy of his steel. Cody coolly knelt, and taking deliberate aim, sent his bullet through the chief's leg and into his horse's head. Down went the two,





BUFFALO BILL



WESLEY MERRITT

In the uniform of a Major General.



CHARLES KING

A photograph taken later as a Brigadier General.

and, before his friends could reach him, a second shot from Bill's rifle laid the redskin low."<sup>13</sup> Although the group had been made to dismount and to receive the charge on foot, the story was still within the facts. Cody's fall from his horse might account for the error.

King wrote his first real account of the fight, in which the events are fairly portrayed, some four years after this. Meanwhile, however, Cody's friend and press agent, John Burke, was far from idle. As one of Buffalo Bill's biographers has ably written: "From that day the publicity of Buffalo Bill began to display real genius. Burke ceased to be an ordinary press agent and began to mold a gigantic figure. Bill Cody ceased to be a genuine scout who was incidentally appearing in melodrama. He became a professional player, whose every movement must be directed by a showman's hand and whose past career must be overhauled to make a showman's tradition."<sup>14</sup>

One example of the story in its most elaborate and apocryphal state will be sufficient. It was, of course, ostensibly written by Cody himself.<sup>15</sup>

"The chief was riding his horse back and forth in front of his men, as if to banter me, and I concluded to accept the challenge. I galloped towards him for fifty yards and he advanced towards me about the same distance, both of us riding at full speed, and then, when we were only thirty yards apart, I raised my rifle and fired; his horse fell to the ground, having been killed by my bullet. Almost at the same instant my own horse went down, he having stepped into a gopher hole. The fall did not hurt me much, and I instantly sprang to my feet. The Indian had also recovered himself, and we were now both on foot, and not more than twenty paces apart. We fired at each other simultaneously. My usual luck did not desert me on this occasion, for his bullet missed me, while mine struck him in the breast: He reeled and fell but before he had fairly touched the ground I was upon him, knife in hand, and had driven the keen-edged weapon to its hilt in his heart. Jerking his war-bonnet off I scientifically scalped him in about five seconds.

"The whole affair from beginning to end occupied but little time, and the Indians, seeing that I was some little distance from my company, now came charging down upon me from a hill, in hopes of cutting me off. General Merritt had witnessed the duel, and realizing the danger I was in, ordered Colonel Mason with Company K to hurry to my rescue. The order came none too soon, for had it been given one minute later I would have had not less than two hundred Indians upon me. As the soldiers came up I swung the Indian chieftain's top-knot and bonnet in the air and shouted: "*'The first scalp for Custer.'*"<sup>16</sup>

Quite aside from its interest as a Buffalo Bill hero tale, the fight has military importance. It is one of the few cases where a large war party of Indians was successfully ambushed by troops, and seems the more remarkable in consideration of the fact that the same organization had failed in a similar effort less than two weeks before. That the trap was sprung too early, in order to save the lives of two white men, reduced the casualties among the Indians to one, but it did not undermine the ultimate result of keeping some

On the 17th of July, 1876.



**DEATH OF YELLOW HAND -- CODY'S FIRST SCALP FOR CUSTER.**

The fictitious illustration which appeared  
for many years in all the Wild West programs.

Reproduced with permission from a program in the possession of William Stone, Esq.



800 Southern Cheyenne warriors out of the hostile camp of Sitting Bull, nor did it prevent saving the new settlements in the Black Hills from their raids. Had the braves of this party broken through, it is probable that many more Indians from the Red Cloud and Spotted Tail reservations would have followed them to war.

The formation adopted by Merritt, a cavalry charge in line with flanks refused, seems peculiarly well adapted to the situation. It gave the Indians no opportunity to escape to the flanks: their only possible move was rapid retreat to the rear, and had it been practicable to carry out the original plan it is almost certain that they would have been completely surrounded.

### Notes

1. There is another South Fork of the Cheyenne, south of the Mini Pusa.
2. White's surname is given as "Johathon" on his headstone at Slim Buttes battlefield, where he was killed. King calls him "James" and he is referred to as "Charley" and "Frank" in other accounts. He was devoted to Cody and copied him in every way possible, because of which he was jokingly called "Buffalo Chips." He accepted the nickname as a compliment.
3. The Niobrara was also called Running Water.
4. The name of this creek has caused much confusion. The "record of events" sections on muster rolls of the regiment generally refer to it as "Indian Creek," although Company I has "War Bonnet Creek." It was also called "Hat Creek" and this is the accepted modern designation. All three names appear on some maps as branches of the same stream. I have used "War Bonnet," for that designation seems to be the most desirable historically. The site of the fight has been identified and marked by a group of men headed by Brig. Gen. W. C. Brown, retired, and General King, mentioned below. Among the most active of this group was Mr. Al Rundquist, upon whose maps of the locality the sketches used with this article are based.
5. This is the same officer who, as Captain Charles King, wrote *Campaigning with Crook*, (Milwaukee, 1880). It is from this work that his eye-witness account is taken. King's first account was written for the *Milwaukee Journal* in 1880, and was published as the pamphlet mentioned above that same year. It was published in book form ten years later. His final conclusions are embodied in an article by the present author, "My Friend, Buffalo Bill," *Cavalry Journal*, Sept.-Oct., 1932. King wrote some sixty military novels, of which *The Colonel's Daughter*, at least, should be remembered. He became a brigadier general of volunteers in the war with Spain, commanded a brigade in the Philippine Insurrection and served later as major general, Wisconsin National Guard.
6. *Daily Oklahoman*, November 4, 1934.
7. These couriers were identified by Frederick Post, a former sergeant of their company, in a letter to King dated May 2, 1929.
8. The direct quotations are taken without change from *Campaigning with Crook*. Essentially they agree with those given in the *New York Herald* account of July 23, 1876. King in recent years stated that they were written exactly as they were spoken.
9. That Cody shot and killed the Cheyenne seems amply proven. One of the troopers of Company D was James B. Frew. In his diary, published in part by *Winners of the West* (April 30, 1936), appears the entry: "July 17, 1876. Indians reported by the pickets. Command ordered to secrete in the ravines, but two couriers arriving from agency being in danger Cody fired on them, killing the chief, Yellow Hand. The rest tried to rescue him but we charged, killing six. Followed them into the agency 40 miles." While this account overstates the number of casualties, it confirms the shooting.

10. However, the skirmish is recorded in the records of the companies and some of these accounts are not without interest. Company A reported: "Early on the morning of July 17, a party of seven Indians was discovered trying to cut off two couriers with dispatches for the command. The Regimental Commander immediately dispatched a party in pursuit which succeeded in killing one Indian." Company I's record reads: "Returned 73 miles by Sage Creek to War Bonnet Creek to assist in preventing certain Cheyenne Indians from leaving Red Cloud Agency, which Indians, numbering several hundred, were turned back, July 17, two or three of them being killed." Most of the other returns mention only one Indian killed. Company B mentions "one (1) Indian and pony killed." Indian sources also agree that Yellow Hair was the only casualty.
11. The Kerngood referred to was Moses Kerngood, who owned a clothing store in Rochester, N. Y. According to an account in the *Baltimore Sun* of December 21, 1936, his daughter, Mrs. Harry O. Schloss, of Baltimore, now has this letter together with other relics of the fight—but not the scalp. Mrs. Cody, according to Courtney Riley Cooper, who wrote *The Last of the Great Scouts* in collaboration with her, says she told of opening the box referred to, and of fainting when she saw the scalp. Cody never denied it, and Dexter Fellowes, his press agent for many years, tells, in a recent book, of seeing it on one occasion.
12. These facts were related by King in a letter to the author, March 20, 1929. King stated that the account was not entirely as he wrote it, which can readily be appreciated. He objected specifically to that phrase, possibly garbled in transmission, which gave the impression that Wilkinson had killed an Indian from the hilltop.
13. *New York Herald*, July 23, 1876, with date line, Fort Laramie, July 22.
14. Richard J. Walsh, *The Making of Buffalo Bill*, p. 202.
15. All of Cody's "autobiographies" were ghost-written, as were his public speeches. In private conversation he is said to have been much more accurate, frequently denying the statements of his press agents.
16. Walsh, *supra*. The biography from which Mr. Walsh quotes is not known to me. A comparison with a nearly identical account in *Buffalo Bill's Life Story* (New York, 1920) will illustrate the remarkably curious variations that occur between all of these books. In *True Tales from the Plains*, published in 1908, Cody's own account is not made to vary far from the facts.  
 "It was in this engagement that fate allotted to me the duty to meet personally and successfully the war-chief, Yellow Hand. A matter of detail that I well remember, the chief yelled to me to "Come on! Come on! White Long Hair" ("Cooa! cooa! Pe-Ha-He-Has-Ka" in Cheyenne). We both fired simultaneously, my first bullet going through the chief's leg and entering the body of his horse. His bullet glanced on my saddle, and my horse stumbled in a prairie-dog hole, but I landed on my feet. Kneeling quickly, I put a bullet through the head of his horse, coming on at speed. Thus we were both afoot and in close proximity."  
 Here Cody's story ends and the reader is now given what purports to be the complete *New York Herald* article with a quotation from *Campaigning With Crook* added. But the newspaper article has itself been altered. The first shot now goes "into his horse" and not "into his horse's head" although the second shot still "laid the redskin low." Furthermore, in the midst of the quotation from King the following apocryphal sentence is added: "After a hand-to-hand struggle, Cody wins, and the young chief, Yellow Hand, drops lifeless in his tracks after a hot fight." Such are the ways of press agents! As for the "Cooa! Pe-Ha-He-Has-Ka" episode, King's later comment is illuminating. It was simply "Bosh!"

## THE HISTORICAL SECTION, ARMY WAR COLLEGE

BY JOSEPH MILLS HANSON\*

The first definite steps toward the establishment of an historical section of the General Staff, United States Army, were taken early in January, 1914. But four years, almost to the day, elapsed before the project became an actuality.

The general staffs of the armies of several foreign countries had maintained historical sections for a number of years prior to 1914. Nevertheless, the need for such an organization in our military establishment did not find formal expression until after the delivery of a lecture on the subject, "The Function of Military History," by Doctor, later Major, Robert M. Johnston, Professor of Military History, Harvard University, at the Army War College on January 2, 1914. The next day Major General Leonard Wood, then Chief of Staff, wrote to Colonel John Biddle, Chief of the War College Division, asking for the recommendation of officers qualified to begin the creation of an historical section.

As a result of General Wood's initiative, Colonel Biddle recommended several officers of recognized competence in modern methods of historical research. Notable among them were Majors John McA. Palmer, Daniel W. Ketcham and William D. Connor, and Captains James W. McAndrew, Arthur L. Conger, Stuart Heintzelman, Oliver L. Spaulding and Henry C. Smither. A committee, formed in the War College Division, consisting of Majors Ketcham and Connor and Captain Smither, immediately recommended that the United States military attachés in France, England, Japan, Austria-Hungary and Germany be directed to furnish detailed reports upon the historical sections of the general staffs of those countries.

Eventually, valuable reports were received from the several attachés mentioned, while some of the officers who had been proposed as organizers for the historical section were afforded opportunities to lecture at the Army War College. But nothing further was done toward placing such a section upon a functioning basis until January 2, 1918.

On that day General Tasker H. Bliss, Chief of Staff, made a recommendation to the Secretary of War for the prompt organization of an historical section. It was approved, and on January 18 the Chief of the War College Division submitted to the Chief of Staff a memorandum favoring an historical section patterned upon the European model, which had been described to the American Historical Association by Colonel Azan, of the French Army. Based upon this plan, the War College Division proposed the organization of an American historical section to embrace:

"(a) A military history branch divided into:

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1. A committee dealing with the history of former wars.
  2. A committee dealing with current military history.
- (b) An archive branch in charge of the library and manuscripts, and co-operating with the present map branch of the Intelligence Section."

Lieutenant Colonel Arthur L. Conger was recommended as the first chief of the proposed section, charged with the responsibility for its organization. The detail of seven general staff officers also was requested, with six attached officers as assistants, to carry on the work of the section.

No immediate action was taken on the above proposal, and before any finally was taken, the plans both for the organization and for its functions were radically modified. Nevertheless, the place of the Historical Section in the military establishment was specified on February 14, 1918, in General Order No. 14, War Department.

In the meantime, General Pershing, commanding the American Expeditionary Forces in France, was requested by cable to express his views on a desirable organization for the section. In his reply he suggested the detail of five officers, chosen for their military attainments and historical ability and training, to compose the Section, and the selection of two outstanding civilian historians as expert advisers. He also recommended that, when organized, the Section should be sent to his headquarters to carry on its work.

As the result of further thought on the subject in this country there were finally detailed for the historical project in Washington, Majors John Bigelow, Herbert H. Sargent, Adna G. Clarke and Sherman A. White, and on March 5, 1918, Lieutenant Colonel Charles W. Weeks was assigned to duty as Chief of the Historical Section, which was placed under the War Plans Division. Eventually, during the year 1918, the Section reached a personnel peak of approximately eighty persons.

While these developments were occurring in the United States, provision for an Historical Sub-section in France was made on February 16, in General Order No. 31, General Headquarters, A. E. F. In this order, which defined the staff duties of the General Headquarters, it was stated that the Secretary of the General Staff, among other duties, "supervises historical sub-section, which collects data as to our official history of the war, and keeps a War Diary."

Owing to delay in the arrival of officers from the United States to take up the duties of the Historical Sub-section, Brigadier General James G. Harbord, Chief of Staff, through Colonel Frank R. McCoy, then Secretary of the General Staff, ordered the present writer to report from his regiment to Chaumont on March 19, to begin the organization of the Sub-section. By direction of Colonel McCoy, he formulated a system for recording, day by day, the nature and repositories of all important documents and communications, not secret, originating in or coming to the staff sections and the administrative and technical branches of General Headquarters. This system was

approved and put into operation.

Early in April, the Sub-section was transferred to the Second Section (G-2) Intelligence, under Brigadier General Dennis E. Nolan, Assistant Chief of Staff. Late in May, Major Robert M. Johnston, with other officers, arrived from Washington and assumed charge of the Sub-section, the present writer remaining with it as second in charge until October, when he was transferred to other duty.

Shortly after the Armistice a number of officers senior to Major Johnston joined the Sub-section. It was placed under the Deputy Chief of Staff, Brigadier General LeRoy Eltinge, its designation was changed to Historical Section, and the scope of its activities was greatly increased. Before the return of G. H. Q., A. E. F., to the United States, the Section accomplished some very important work. It conducted an extensive survey of the battlefields, in order to make of record any physical evidences remaining of the operations which had occurred upon them, and it selected, from the documents accumulated at Chaumont, about 100,000 which were thought to be of sufficient permanent historical value to justify their consideration for publication.

Upon the arrival of the Chaumont section in Washington it was combined with the one in that city as the Historical Branch, War Plans Division, General Staff. For a year or more it functioned under that designation, and was then transferred to the Army War College, where it has since remained. Its activities for a period of about ten years were concentrated chiefly upon the preparation of monographs and other studies relating to the operations of the American Expeditionary Forces abroad. A considerable amount of pioneer research and writing, preliminary to more exhaustive consideration and treatment of the great body of pertinent documents, was thus accomplished.

The initiation of a more precise program of work came on August 14, 1929, with the transmission from the War Department through the Adjutant General's Office, of a Directive to the Commandant of the Army War College for the Historical Section. This order prescribed the abandonment of all further preparation of monographs on the World War, and stated that the principal future function of the Section would be the collection and study of the official records of the War Department and other official agencies, which, when properly collated, would provide the material for complete and accurate accounts of the participation of the military forces of the United States in the World War. Although it specifically stated that the general plan of the Official Records, War of the Rebellion, was to be used as a guide in the collation and arrangement of data, the Directive, at the same time, cautioned against faults manifest in those records in the selection, arrangement and indexing of documents.

The Directive, with its outlined program, was followed on November 4, 1929, by a much more extensive letter of instructions from the Commandant of the Army War College to the Chief of the Historical Section, on methods

for carrying out that program. It must suffice here to describe very briefly the procedure set forth therein, which has been followed to the present time.

Practically all of the relevant American archives of the World War are deposited in the files of the Adjutant General, who provides the Historical Section with office space and facilities for studying them. The sheer bulk of these records made it necessary, as the first phase of the project, to search through the entire mass of documents, about twelve million in number, and to select and index those of sufficient possible permanent historical value to justify their consideration for publication.

From November, 1929, to December, 1933, the officers of the Historical Section selected and indexed about 100,000 such documents. These, with the 100,000 previously assembled at Chaumont, made about 200,000 papers selected for final evaluation and cataloguing. Since December, 1933, the personnel of the Section has been engaged in the latter work, which constitutes the second phase of the project.

In accomplishing it an officer is assigned a specific unit, for example, a division. From the papers previously selected he collects all those relating to that division and arranges them by category and date. Gaps in the record he fills, if possible, by securing the missing papers from other, related files. He then analyzes each paper technically and makes his professional decision as to whether it shall be accepted or rejected as a military historical document. If accepted, he states upon a card that it is recommended either for printing in full, printing in extract, or merely for mention in a catalogue. It takes an officer about a year to catalogue the operations papers of an active division. His work is reviewed by another officer.

When evaluation and cataloguing has been finished for all units it will be easy to extract, from the papers pertaining to any one, those bearing upon a specific operation, such as the fighting near Cambrai, or around St.-Mihiel. To these can then be added the relevant documents of the French or British headquarters under which American units served, and of the German units which opposed them. Such documents are constantly being secured and transmitted to Washington by officers on duty abroad.

It has been roughly estimated that the American documents contained in catalogues already completed dealing with the operations of the A. E. F. amount to ten million words. On this basis it is thought that the total may amount to forty million words, exclusive of maps and sketches. By way of comparison, the operations volumes of the Rebellion Records contain about seventy million words, and as an addendum to these volumes there is an atlas of a thousand maps and sketches.

The time that will be required for completing and publishing the work has been rendered quite indefinite by several reductions in the number of officers working on the project. In October, 1935, when fifteen officers in Washington were cataloguing operations papers of the A. E. F., it was judged that the



portion of this work then remaining would take about five years. Since then the number of officers engaged has been reduced to five, so that the time required for the task will naturally be much greater.

Organizations such as armies, corps, and divisions are taken up for study approximately in the order in which they went into action. Hence, catalogues of the American papers dealing with the earlier operations are the ones which have most nearly approached completion, and have become available for professional study by the Army service schools, and for use by persons interested in the histories of particular units. The foreign documents thus far received are also available, either in translation or in the original languages.

In addition to its main objectives, the Historical Section is charged with the responsibility for carrying on various other projects, and certain current business of the War Department. It has prepared and published two volumes detailing the Order of Battle of the United States Land Forces in the World War, the first volume covering General Headquarters, Armies, Army Corps, Services of Supply, and Separate Forces, and the second volume the Divisions, of the A. E. F.

The Chief of the Historical Section is the agent of communication between the War Department and the National Archives, while the Section itself is the agency of the War Department for handling questions concerning unit histories and credit for battle participation for the Regular Army, the National Guard, and the Organized Reserves. It also receives and endeavors to answer inquiries of all kinds, from official and private quarters, having to do with military history.

The work which it has accomplished and the functions which have logically gravitated toward it since the beginning of its active existence in 1918, have amply proved the value of the Historical Section in our military establishment. That its usefulness will continue and increase in the future is hardly to be doubted.

#### AUTHORITIES

- War Department Directive for Historical Section, Army War College, August 14, 1929.
- Instructions on Methods of Carrying Out the War Department Directive of August 14, 1929, from the Commandant of the Army War College to the Chief of the Historical Section, November 4, 1929.
- Memorandum for Congressional Committee hearing on work of the Historical Section, Army War College, by Colonel Oliver L. Spaulding, Chief, Historical Section, January 30, 1937.
- Manuscript of a partial history of the Historical Section, by Mr. R. S. Thomas, Chief Clerk, Historical Section, Army War College.

## UNITED STATES MILITARY SHOULDER ARMS, 1795-1935

### 2. *The French Military Musket as an American Weapon*

BY JAMES E. HICKS AND FRED PORTER TODD

The French musket duly deserves recognition as one of our standard military arms, indeed as the actual grandsire of our long line of infantry weapons. Its wide, almost exclusive, use in our first two major wars and its adoption as a pattern for the American arms of four decades entitle its story to be given in some detail.

Since 1718, the French armories at Charleville, Saint-Etienne and Maubeuge had been manufacturing infantry muskets, as well as other weapons, under the control of the *Corps royal de l'artillerie*. Rigorous inspections were conducted by its officers, experiments were constantly being made to develop new designs and methods of manufacture, and uniformity of fabrication was insisted upon.<sup>1</sup> As a result of these far-sighted policies the French musket gradually became accepted as superior to all other government-manufactured arms. This superiority existed in its range and general sturdiness and, consequently, to some degree, in accuracy as well. In the later models careful boring of the barrel, together with the use of a somewhat lighter ball than was customary at the period, gave the bullet an average flight of 200 yards when the musket was fired with a regulation charge from a horizontal position five feet above the ground. This range more than doubled that of the British Brown Bess, while the range of the Prussian musket was somewhat less than that of the British.<sup>2</sup> Important also was the added strength gained by securing the barrel to the forestock with metal bands instead of with pins, and by improving the neck of the cock.

During this regulated manufacture under the Royal government, the armories issued twelve successive models, each embracing certain improvements in design.<sup>3</sup> It is with the models of 1763, 1766 and 1776 (these last two containing sufficiently fundamental changes to entitle them to be called "systems") that we will be most concerned. All of the armories functioned normally until 1792 when the exigencies of the French Revolution required forced, and necessarily inferior, production.

Early in the American Revolution the Continental Congress cast about for means of supplementing the limited production of arms in this country.<sup>4</sup> Before its Secret Committee in January, 1776, appeared two aggressive Frenchmen, styling themselves Pliarne, Penet et Cie. and unfolding an interesting offer.<sup>5</sup> The French armories it seemed had a considerable stock of muskets in the best of condition that they could be persuaded to sell—muskets, furthermore, it was added with pardonable exaggeration, of the latest model. Up to this time the Committee had been able to obtain only a few hundred guns,

chiefly from the West Indies, and here they were being offered in lots of a thousand. The members hesitated, for Pliarne and Penet could give little proof of their ability to carry out the bargain. But not for long as the need for arms was growing more acute with each day and in a few months the Frenchmen sailed with the contracts.

Fortunately they took also a good suggestion of Benjamin Franklin's that they communicate with Dr. Barbeau Dubourg of Paris, an active enthusiast for the American cause. This Penet did upon his arrival in May. Dubourg instantly began to pull wires and by June 10 was able to write Franklin that he and Penet had arranged with a manufacturer of arms to obtain from the arsenal at Lyons 15,000 muskets of the model 1763. "The first part of these muskets," the letter ran, "is already on the road to Nantes, where M. Penet looks for the vessels which your Secret Committee is to send thither. I hope your brave soldiers will be pleased with these muskets; but you must caution them not to trust to the ordinary commercial weapons which are called *fusils de traite* and which are almost as dangerous to friend as to foe."<sup>6</sup> These arms were actually loaded aboard a French vessel when the contractors disagreed on the price causing the scheme to fall through. Yet Dubourg and Penet had seen what could be accomplished and within a short time had procured another 10,000 stands.<sup>7</sup> These men were the first to ship arms to this country in any quantity and while they were later to prove most troublesome to the Americans it must, in fairness, be stated that in the beginning they were untiring in their efforts to secure a high grade of weapon.<sup>8</sup>

Space does not allow us to go, beyond a few meagre observations, into the involved history of these arms contracts. By August 17, 1776, Silas Deane, our agent in France, had learned that the reason behind the sale of these French weapons was the development of the improved musket of the system of 1776 and its intended issue to the entire French army. Of the older and heavier models, most of which were in almost new condition, some seventy or eighty thousand lay useless in the magazines.<sup>8</sup> Furthermore, Deane had commenced to work with another even greater and more influential enthusiast, the incredible Caron de Beaumarchais. Through his theatrically fictitious house of Roderigue Hortalès et Cie. America secured the bulk of the arms imported during the Revolutionary period.<sup>9</sup> By his extraordinary efforts, aided surreptitiously by the French government, eight ships loaded with 37,000 muskets and other military supplies (including an assortment of French officers) were ready to sail by December 1, 1776. In all, ten of the Hortalès ships were able to slip through the British blockade and reach this country in the following year.<sup>10</sup> The arms aboard the *Amphitrite* and the *Mercure*, which together transported more than 18,000 complete stands, arrived in time to be used at Saratoga. Indeed, in this year enough French arms were imported to equip the entire American army.<sup>11</sup>



Several points are clear regarding the character of these muskets imported from France. Although Pliarne and Penet always maintained that their guns were "the last mode for the Infantry of France," this we know was not precisely true.<sup>12</sup> Although doubtless some of the much older types were included it seems fair to assume that the vast majority were of the model of 1763. Of the twenty-four specimens in the museum at Washington's Headquarters, Newburgh, N. Y., twenty-one are of this model, while the remaining three are of the system of 1766. An even more important fact seems equally clear, that few if any of the guns manufactured under the system of 1776 were included in these shipments. Most of the weapons imported appear to have been fabricated at the Charleville armory and for this reason they came to be known in America by the all-embracing title of "Charleville."<sup>13</sup> The name clung even to the copies manufactured in our own shops. Occasionally they were called "Lafayette muskets"—owing perhaps to the fact that the Marquis stood for all things French in the eyes of the Continental soldier. The guns were, by and large, in excellent condition and there are but few recorded complaints about their performance in the American service.

At the termination of the Revolution the Charleville continued to be used by what remained of our regular army and by most of the infantry militia units. A considerable supply was stored away in our various arsenals for future use and it is interesting to observe that, in 1791, a thousand of these muskets were resold to France for use in her colonies.<sup>14</sup> They apparently formed a large proportion of the weapons used in the War of 1812, for we find New York requisitioning 2,000 additional in the first year of that conflict and the Commissary General of Pennsylvania with "French muskets" on hand in 1814.<sup>15</sup> But let us glance backward a few years toward another equally important use to which the Charleville was put; its employment as the pattern for our own weapons.

The year 1794 bringing with it certain rumors of war, the Secretary of War recommended to the Third Congress that steps be taken to obtain additional weapons and to insure the regular manufacture of arms in this country.<sup>16</sup> With its familiar trend towards materiel as against personnel, that body directed, by the Act of April 2, 1794, the establishment of three or four arsenals with magazines for the safekeeping of military stores and the establishment of a national armory for the fabrication of small arms at each of these arsenals, the locations to be selected by President Washington.<sup>17</sup> Two were chosen: Springfield, Massachusetts, which had been associated with the manufacture of arms since 1776 and already contained a considerable number of shops and warehouses, and Harpers Ferry, Virginia, presumably because its location was suited to the needs of the South. Actual production was commenced at the former place in 1795 and at the latter in 1801, though the erection of shops was started there in 1796.<sup>18</sup> On December 12, 1795, the Secretary of War reported:

"To increase the stock of small arms and to render serviceable those already in the public store, two sets of armorers have been employed, to wit: at Springfield, Mass. and at New London, Va., in repairing arms and *preparing* to manufacture the most essential parts of muskets; and some specimens have been produced which prove their capacity to equal, in that article, the manufacture of any country in the world . . . Such muskets as are manufactured are after the model of the French arms, which compose, by far, the greatest part of those in our magazines. For this reason, and because they are preferable to those of any other nation known in the United States, it was apparently inexpedient to make an importation of arms from Europe; seeing a supply was not to be expected from France, and the situation of the United States not rendering the measure of an immediate importation indispensable."<sup>19</sup>

In other words they were about to take the old Charleville of the model of 1763 as a pattern.

This decision indeed is curious. Between 1763 and 1794 the French armies had issued seven successive infantry models under the Royal government and one under the republican regime.<sup>20</sup> Even if many of the changes involved in each model were slight, the fact remains that the musket then in common use in France was a considerably more advanced weapon than the one produced thirty-one years earlier. That its superiority must have appeared striking to an American is indicated by the action of Eli Whitney, manufacturing under the government contracts of 1798. He had been given the model of 1763 as a pattern and was in the midst of his first order when he saw a French weapon dated 1797, sent back by James Monroe, then envoy extraordinary to France. Its advancements so impressed Whitney that he immediately tried for and obtained government permission to substitute it as the model.<sup>21</sup> He continued to use it as the pattern in his contract of 1808 with the State of New York, his specifications distinctly calling for improvements over the U. S. regulation musket.<sup>22</sup>

The answer appears to be that there probably was no decision made. The official records of the Ordnance Department for that period are so confusing that they seem only to establish, as Mr. Claude E. Fuller has said, "the fact that there were no regularly adopted models during the first years."<sup>23</sup> Perhaps it was found impossible to import any of the newer models from France but rather does it appear that the chief difficulty lay with the inexperience of our armorers. The old Charleville had given good service and there were numerous examples of it to use as models; that was the limit of their vision. Not until much later were the French improvements embodied in our own weapons. Only in 1810, after a careful investigation, could the Secretary of War report that "it appears that, in the early stages of that manufactory, muskets of an inferior quality were made; that improvements have been gradually making; and that those manufactured within the last year are of superior quality."<sup>24</sup>

## Notes

1. Maurice Bottet, *Monographie de l'Arme à Feu Portative* . . . (Paris, 1886).
2. Armand Julin, *Monographies des Ouvriers des Canons de Fusil*. C. W. Sawyer, *Fire-arms in American History*, I, 200 et seq. *Bull. Milwaukee Pub. Mus.*, "The Rudolph J. Nunnemacher Collection of Projectile Arms," I, 105-108. See also notes by Major G. Tylden in *Jour. Soc. Army Hist. Research*, Vol. XIV, No. 56, pp. 225-227.
3. These models were: 1717, 1728, 1746, 1754, 1763, 1766, 1768, 1770, 1771, 1773, 1774, 1776 (marked 1777), Bottet.
4. *Jour. Cont. Cong.*, II, 253; III, 280, 336, 453; IV, 24.
5. Force, 4th, IV, 660; Burnett, *Letters of Members of the Continental Congress*, p. 299.
6. Dubourg to Franklin, June 10, 1776, Force, 4th, VI, 774. Henri Doniol, *Histoire de la Participation de la France* . . . , I, 508-509. For some details of this contract see also B. F. Stevens, *Facsimiles* . . . , 574.
7. Stevens, *Facsimiles* . . . , 887, 888.
8. Deane to Com. Sec. Corr., August 18, 1776, Force, 5th, I, 1014.
9. Beaumarchais to Com. Sec. Corr., August 18, 1776, Force, 5th, I, 1022. Doniol, vols. I and II, *passim*.
10. Beaumarchais to Vergennes, March 7, 1777, Doniol, II, 315.
11. G. L. Clark, *Silas Deane*, pp. 89-90. The value of the supplies shipped by Beaumarchais to this country at our time of greatest need has been estimated at over two million, two hundred thousand francs. He died in 1795, unpaid and in great poverty. His experience was, moreover, common to almost all who at that period had business relations with this country. Narratives of these debts reflect little glory on the United States.
12. Pliarne, Penet et Cie. to the New York Convention, Force, 5th, II, 1147. *Ibid.*, III, 610.
13. The reason for this disproportionment of Charlevilles is obscure and may well be less of an accident than it now appears. Did the Charleville armory fabricate most of the muskets of 1763 and were these of a superior quality? When the first shipment contracted for by Dubourg and Penet arrived at Nantes the latter wisely opened a case and found that the weapons were inferior in quality to what had been ordered. He removed one musket from the box and, bringing it to Dubourg, compared it with one "from Charleville." Discussion by Dubourg, August 1776, Stevens, *Facsimiles* . . . , 574. This subject would bear more research.
14. Returns of Ordnance . . . , December 14, 1793; *Amer. State Papers*, Mil. Aff., I, 44-60.
15. *Pub. Papers of Daniel D. Tompkins*, Military, III, 365-366. *Penn. Archives*, Second Series, XII, 738.
16. Report of the Sect. of War, March 4, 1794, *Amer. State Papers*, Mil. Aff., I, 65-66.
17. *Public Statutes at Large*, I, 352.
18. Joseph Barry, *The Annals of Harpers Ferry*.
19. Report of the Sect. of War, December 12, 1795. *Amer. State Papers*, Mil. Aff., I, 110.
20. This last was the infantry carbine, model 1793 (of Versailles). The republican government contented itself chiefly with the manufacture of older models until 1802, when it produced its "Model 1777, corrected in the year IX." Bottet, pp. 13-26.
21. Decius Wadsworth to the Sect. of War, June 6, 1814, reproduced in Claude E. Fuller, *Springfield Shoulder Arms, 1795-1865*, p. 29.
22. *Pub. Papers of Daniel D. Tompkins*, Military, II, 200, 258.
23. Fuller, p. 26 et seq. Mr. Fuller's valuable book is the starting point of all research on early Springfield weapons.
24. Report of the Sect. of War, February 27, 1810, *Amer. State Papers*, Mil. Aff., I, 255.

## THE MILITARY LIBRARY

*The United States Army in War and Peace*, by Oliver Lyman Spaulding.  
(New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons. 1937. Pp. 541. \$6.00.)

The publication within a relatively few months, by G. P. Putnam's Sons, of a history of the Navy and a history of the Army, written respectively by the outstanding historical scholar in each service, has all the earmarks of a literary conspiracy in which the initiative was taken by the publishers. This impression is strengthened by the catholicity of Colonel Spaulding's work, which suggests a conscious effort to write to publishers' specifications or at least to the same mass-consumption pattern which publishers find desirable in a conspectus.

Colonel Spaulding has previously demonstrated himself one of the very few American scholars fitted to write the history of the art of war or of what the French call "military institutions." In the present work he has restrained his peculiar genius in order to write a more general history wherein the familiar story of military operations in our major wars occupies about 60% of the text. Even so, the story of these operations has had to be presented in a summary fashion involving considerable dehydration. On the other hand, the author has succeeded in covering in due proportion the many other aspects of our military history, including the Army's contributions to pioneering in various fields, its endless constabulary activities on the frontier, at home, and overseas, the development of our military institutions, and the evolution of the art of war in America. All these elements have been blended into a composition whose integration and balance leave little room for improvement within the chosen scope.

The significance of this statement can be appreciated only if it is realized that almost all preceding works on the history of our army have been pitifully defective in their comprehension of American military developments in the light of universal military evolution. The altogether different quality of the present work appears at once in the opening chapter, in which the military background of the American colonists is set forth with admirable roundness and clarity. Throughout the work this "anthropological" approach, of altogether fundamental importance to any fuller understanding, is never allowed to be submerged. For this reason, among others, Colonel Spaulding has achieved the distinction of being the first to write a history of our army which is respectable according to the highest standards of scholarship. It is the ultimate in praise, therefore, to say that the task need not be attempted again on the same scale.

In this connection it is worthy of note that the text is documented, which is something pleasantly unusual in our military literature. This documentation and the bibliography seem to indicate that the author is not wholly abreast of the relevant work of civilian scholarship, but in view of the now very great complexity of research results in American history this would be too much to



expect of any but a specialist in that field. Moreover, the sure instinct of the author has endeavored to furnish documentation as far as possible from contemporary sources and has done so with such regularity that the scholarship of the work must be admitted to be generally unimpeachable—which is an extraordinary achievement for a writer who has spent his life in military service.

The perennial problem of maps has been solved perhaps as well as could be. Those provided are very well executed and quite adequate for the purposes of the general reader. Sophisticates might wish for more, but such sophisticates can hardly be satisfied with anything less than a special atlas. A number of appendices contain orders of battle in particular campaigns and tables showing the distribution of the Army at certain periods.

A minor feature of the work which reflects Colonel Spaulding's experience as chief of the Historical Section, Army War College, is the attention given to identification of particular organizations connected with historic events with a view to emphasizing those continuities of regimental history which have survived the vagaries of Congress. Such continuities are systematically exploited today to give organizations the moral tone which comes from a proud tradition, as has long been the case in the British service. The prominence with which particular regiments appear in British military history has always lent an additional interest to that history, and Colonel Spaulding's effort to achieve a similar effect may be said to be distinctly successful.

D. D. I.

*Old Fuss and Feathers, The Life and Exploits of Lieut. General Winfield Scott*, by Arthur D. Howden Smith (New York: The Greystone Press, 1937; Pp. 386; \$4.00.)

One of Winfield Scott's earlier biographers called him the "Giant of Three Wars." Mr. Howden Smith's sub-title reduces this generality into its components: "The only American commander who never lost a battle; the one victorious general to lose a presidential election; patron of Lee; protector of Lincoln; most inept of politicians; strategist; statesman; humanitarian." In spite of Scott's outstanding qualities he has been much neglected by recent writers. The best source material on the general's life, as his present biographer acknowledges, still is furnished by *Memoirs of Lieut.-General Scott, LL.D., Written by Himself*. Almost as valuable, however, are the accounts of two of his staff officers: E. D. Mansfield's *Life of General Winfield Scott* and E. D. Keyes' *Fifty Years' Observation of Men and Events*. But these books are hard to come by these days, as is also *The Campaign of General Scott in the Valley of Mexico* by Raphael Semmes, who himself took part in the actions as aide-de-camp to General Worth. The present biography is then as timely as it is readable.

While the strait-laced pomposity of the famous old soldier would ordinarily have had little appeal to the modern reader, Mr. Howden Smith has succeeded in delightfully presenting not only Scott himself but also a realization of his

truly vast influence on the entire American way of thinking and acting in military matters. This makes no pretense of being a definitive book, and the author appeals to the military experts to make a more thorough technical study of this subject. Yet he seems to have told the story of the campaigns with genuine appreciation of Scott's abilities. He is particularly impressed with the fact that "all the important leaders of the Union and Confederate Armies were trained by him, and that their performances in action were proportionate to the thoroughness with which they had absorbed his ideas."

D. R.

*Yankee Arms Maker: The Incredible Career of Samuel Colt*, by Jack Rohan. (New York: Harper & Brothers. 1935. Pp. 301. \$3.00.)

*The Revolving-Cylinder Colt Pistol Story from 1839 to 1847*, by James H. Edgerly (Topeka, Kansas: F. Theodore Dexter. 1937. Pp. 25. \$2.00.)

*A Century of Achievement, 1836-1936*. (Hartford: Colt's Patent Fire Arms Manufacturing Co. 1937. 25c.)

*Yankee Arms Maker* is the life-story of the inventor of the revolver. It was a full and adventuresome life in which young Colt played strangely diversified parts. To market his inventions he found it necessary to be lobbyist, lecturer, pseudo-scientist and even a smuggler, but he never lost faith in his eventual triumph and was finally rewarded with success. Mr. Rohan, using the voluminous Colt correspondence, only recently made available, has given us an extremely accurate and enjoyable description of the manufacturer's work, trials and accomplishments. There are few references to the weapons themselves, for the story is biographical rather than technical. Yet all collectors interested in the Colt and its lore will enjoy the tale and find that it lends to the study of the weapon a keener flavour of adventure.

Turning from the general to the highly specific we have Mr. Edgerly's recently issued pamphlet on the four Colt revolvers commonly known as the Walker models. They belong to the period from 1839 to 1847, during which time the Patent Arms Manufacturing Company of Paterson, N. J., went through its various stages of dissolution. It embraces one of the least-known episodes of Colt's life as well as giving in considerable technical detail the history of the Colt-Walker-Collins revolver. The monograph is recommended by its publisher only to specialists in American arms, to whom it will be both of interest and of value. While some of Mr. Edgerly's opinions, lacking documentation, doubtless will be questioned and his somewhat repetitious style regretted, he has written a unique contribution to the history of arms which belongs in the library of all advanced collectors.

To commemorate the 100th anniversary of the Colt plant, the company has issued what it calls a "fire arms manual." This is in part a catalogue, in part a history of the principal models from 1836 to date. Illustrated by numerous photographs of the weapons and of plant operations it seems well worth the small price charged.

J. E. H.

*Santa Anna, The Story of an Enigma Who Once Was Mexico.* by Wilfrid Hardy Callcott. (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press. 1937. Pp. 391. \$3.00.)

Santa Anna is perhaps best remembered in this country for the massacre at the Alamo and for the fact that his wooded leg was once captured by United States troops. These two events nicely typify the ruthlessness and the somewhat primitive theatricality of his character. They fail, however, to indicate that in his amazing compound of diverse qualities he also possessed considerable organizing ability and no mean powers as a general. Because of his virtues he was called, an almost incredible number of times, to the helm of Mexico; for his faults he was as frequently overthrown by revolution.

Dr. Callcott has told the involved story of Mexico's politics from her beginning as a nation until 1876—the span of Santa Anna's life—in a clear and interesting fashion. Even tables of *dramatis personæ* and significant dates are provided, in order that the reader may check back on confusing names and situations. Unfortunately, the author has felt diffident of his ability to discuss Santa Anna's military capacity and hence has passed lightly over his campaigns. Since this same capacity played such an important part in his life and in that of his country, this diffidence makes for a marked defect in an otherwise authoritative biography.

Santa Anna is not a popular figure in the Mexico of today, nor is he very favorably painted in such standard histories as Smith's *The War with Mexico*. It is pleasant to find, then, that Dr. Callcott has to a large degree succeeded in solving the fascinating enigma of this contradictory figure and has led us to a new viewpoint. He sums up his findings in this sentence: "And the Almighty, in His wisdom, had seen fit to bless this child of destiny with a marvelous personality, tremendous energy and a facile brain, but, for some inscrutable reason, had omitted the balance-wheel and left him an opportunist."

D. R.

*Les Uniformes de L'Armée Française: Terre-Mer-Air*, by Commandant E.-L. Bucquoy. (Paris: Les Editions Militaires Illustrées. 1935. Pp. 269.)

This is probably the finest work on military costume and equipment that has been issued within the past fifty years; certainly the finest since the World War. Its scope is restricted to the modern French Army whose appearance it describes with a thoroughness which rarely is found, even in the great Russian and German works of the last century. The book contains 124 full-color illustrations by Maurice Toussaint, and innumerable black-and-white drawings.

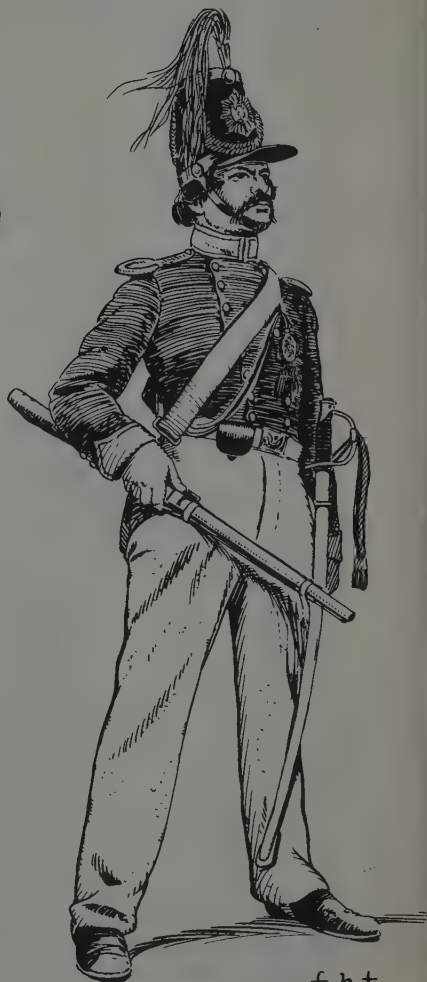
Commandant Bucquoy is today recognized as one of the world's foremost authorities on military costume and is the editor of the quarterly journal of the Société d'Etude des Uniformes: *Le Passepoil*. He is, furthermore, the director of the project which is assembling material on the uniforms and equipment of the Napoleonic era. These costumes, after careful research, are illustrated in color on post-card size sheets and issued, together with full documentation, to subscribers in sets of eight or nine cards. Already this collection embraces over 1600 items.

F. P. T.

FIRST DRAGOONS  
Fort Laramie, 1851.



First Sergeant and  
Trooper —  
Full Dress.



f.p.t.



*Haig*, by Duff Cooper. (Garden City, New York: Doubleday, Doran & Company. 1936. Pp. 381. \$4.00.)

After the publication of Lloyd George's criticism of Haig in his memoirs of the War, Haig's heirs turned over to Duff Cooper, the present British Secretary of State for War, the field marshal's diaries, to aid Cooper in his projected biography. The extracts from these diaries given in the book form the real argument in favour of Haig's tactical beliefs and practices.

Lloyd George's charges are a part of a more general censure of Haig which applies, as well, to most of the other responsible commanders; that they hammered for four years against the solid wall of the Western Front instead of seeking a decision elsewhere. The biographer's answer to this is, mainly, that the decision did come there finally, and he proceeds, with the background of the diaries, to explain in detail the reasons for each of the bloody battles.

American readers will no doubt object to the ignorance of the American effort in the war displayed not only by Haig, but by his biographer as well. These things aside, Duff Cooper has created a very worthy biography of Haig—not so entertaining, perhaps, as his Talleyrand, but with more substance. He does not attempt to make Haig a military genius. He paints a picture of a great soldier, and, with many difficulties because of the field marshal's extreme reticence, a human figure. This is certainly one of the important World War books.

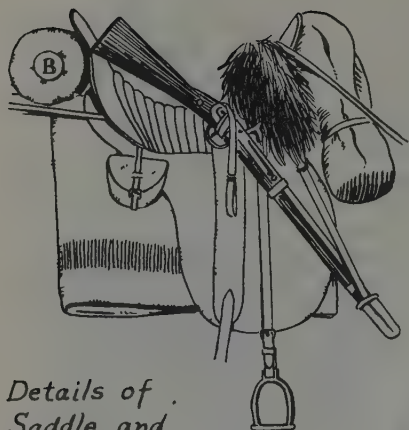
D. R.

## NOTES AND QUERIES

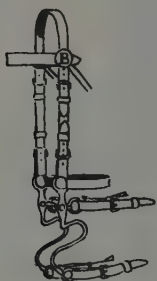
FIRST DRAGOONS, 1851. In the Reserve Room of the New York Public Library rests an interesting group of pen-and-ink and pencil drawings entitled: "A collection of sketches made during the Sioux troubles of 1851." They were executed by an artist about whom little is known, save that his name was apparently "White" and that he probably was sent by a newspaper to cover the Indian council of September, 1851, at Fort Laramie. The majority of the sketches are of Indians, but a few show the troopers of the detachment of the 1st Dragoons which had been detailed to keep order at the Fort.

The men are portrayed usually in the full dress uniforms they wore on such occasions of ceremony: tall, brass-bound felt shakos with white horse-hair plumes; tight-fitting blue, short-tailed coats, trimmed with yellow; and full, grey-blue trousers, fastened by a strap under the shoe. This was the uniform authorized by the General Regulations of 1847. New regulations had been issued on June 12, 1851, which radically changed all of this, but they were not yet considered in effect, as the old clothing had to be exhausted. It was not unusual for the dragoon to be forced to wear this kit in the field. When possible, however, he did his Indian fighting in the fatigue jacket and soft cap.

The Dragoons alone, of all the Army, wore mustaches. Their equipment was often supplemented by articles of Indian origin, such as "breed" leggings,



*Details of  
Saddle and  
Bridle*



# FIRST DRAGOONS Fort Laramie, 1851.



Trooper, Field Service

f.p.t.

shirts of buckskin, buffalo robes and the like. Details of their equipment and clothing may be found in such personal narratives as Percival G. Lowe, *Five Years a Dragoon* and among the drawings and sculpture of that greatest of Western artists, Frederick Remington.

### Queries

8. BREYMANN REDOUBT. What information can you give me on the fortified camp occupied by the German Corps under Lt. Gen. von Breymann during the engagement at Freeman's Farm, October 7, 1777? What were the nature of these entrenchments, particularly what was the construction of the "sally-port" near which Benedict Arnold was wounded? Was the country surrounding the hill wooded and how steep were its sides? G.G. (see replies)

9. CHIN STRAPS. Can you give me any information concerning the origin of the chin strap as used on American military headdress? When was it first worn and for what purpose? G. M.

10. PORTRAITS OF GENERAL HARRISON. At present I am writing of General William Henry Harrison's experiences in the army of the Northwest, 1791-98. The Frick Art Reference Library has reproductions of two portraits of Harrison in uniform. The given explanation of the pictures, which are nearly identical, is that they show Harrison as a major general in the War of 1812. The odd part is that they appear to portray a youth in his early twenties when actually Harrison was forty years old during this war. The pictures were done by Rembrandt Peale.

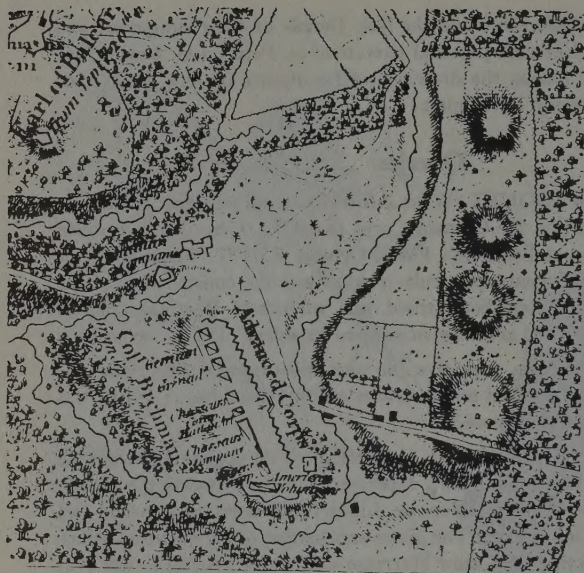
It is my opinion that the original portrait was painted during Harrison's service under General Wayne. He was appointed lieutenant June, 1792; and in the spring of 1793 is known to have visited Philadelphia where young Peale was just beginning to paint. Peale was then fifteen years old and this being one of his earliest attempts at portraiture, it would account for the fact that nothing has ever been written about it. I am interested to know if the uniform shown in the portrait bears out this assumption and if so is it the type that would have been worn by Harrison as a lieutenant in the Legion or as an aide-de-camp, to which latter duty he was appointed in June, 1793.

F. C.

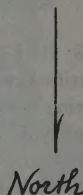
### Replies

8. BREYMANN REDOUBT. To approach your problem first from the topographical angle I would suggest you read the interesting discussion of this in Hoffman Nickerson's *The Turning Point of the Revolution*, Pp. 456-60. Starting with Mr. Nickerson's conclusions you can assume that the "Burgoyne map" is the most reliable for your purposes. Since you are dealing only with a very small section of the British line the relationship of the terrain features of the whole field are of minor importance. This map was drawn by Lt. W. C. Wilkinson, an Assistant Engineer with the 62nd Foot. It appears in

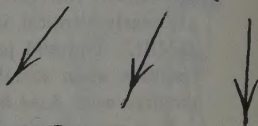




# DIAGRAM "A"

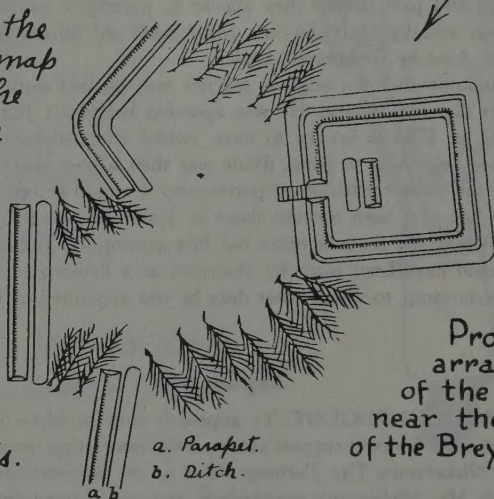


Direction of  
American  
attack



Section of the  
Burgoyne map  
showing the  
Breymann  
redoubt

Secondary  
line —  
Arnold  
probably  
wounded in  
front of this.



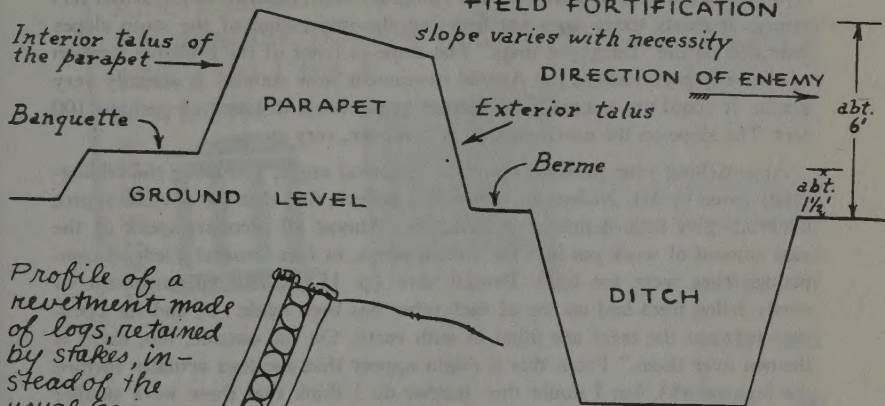
Small  
redoubt.  
(See the word  
"American" in  
the map above.)

Probable  
arrangement  
of the defenses  
near the sally-port  
of the Breymann redoubt.



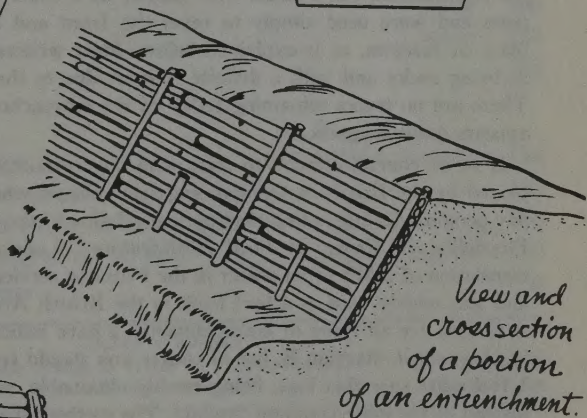
# DIAGRAM "B"

## GENERAL OUTLINES of a FIELD FORTIFICATION



Profile of a  
revetment made  
of logs, retained  
by stakes, in-  
stead of the  
usual fascines.  
Logs probably  
4 to 6 in. thick.

Banquette



Revetment at opening  
in the line, showing foot  
bridge over the ditch.

Based on  
Pleydell,  
(see text)

published form in Lt. Gen. John Burgoyne's *A State of the Expedition from Canada*, (London, 1780). The part of it showing the Breymann redoubt is reproduced in the photostat attached (diagram A). A glance at the actual terrain as it exists today does not bear out the impression of the steep slopes indicated on the "Burgoyne map." The slope in front of the probable location of the sally-port (where the Arnold monument now stands) is actually very gentle. It could not exceed a 30 percent grade for a distance of perhaps 100 feet. The slope on the northern side is, however, very steep.

Approaching your problem from the historical angle, and using the bibliography given by Mr. Nickerson, you will, I believe, find that the obvious source materials give little definitive information. Almost all accounts speak of the vast amount of work put into the fortifications, in fact General Riedesel complained they were too high. Pausch says (p. 152): "An entrenchment of newly felled trees laid on top of each other has been made . . . and the openings between the trees are filled in with earth. On the outside, too, earth is thrown over them." From this it might appear that the logs actually formed the breastworks, but I doubt this. Rather do I think that these were smaller trees and were used simply to revet the front and back of the parapet in place of fascines, as is explained below. Most writers refer to the hill itself as being rocky and with a definite contour due to the steepness of its sides. There are no traces remaining today of the entrenchments and the hill itself appears quite insignificant.

It is, of course, difficult to state with any certainty what system was employed by the British or German engineer officers who laid out these works. My personal feeling is that they probably followed the methods given in Lieut. Pleydell's *An Essay on Field Fortification*, (London, 1768). This was a translation of a MS of an officer in the Prussian service. It was well illustrated and was widely used as a text book in the British Army. It gives minute instructions for all types of entrenchments. I have indicated the chief points to be observed in diagram B, but of course you should try to get the book itself. I feel quite sure that logs, being readily obtainable, were used for revetment instead of the more common fascines. The method of placing them, illustrated in the diagram, is largely conjecture, although I believe this system to be the most logical. Usually the parapet was revetted only on the inside. Doubtless logs also would have been used for any bridges over the ditch, although it is conceivable that the hillside was steep enough to obviate digging one.

The sally-port probably was merely an opening in the lines protected on the outside by a small redoubt and on the inside by a secondary line. Such openings were filled with trees during an engagement, the tangle of limbs making an excellent abattis. I have suggested a possible arrangement of the entrenchments around the sally-port in diagram A. I also suggest you look up John Muller's *The Field Engineer* (London, 1773) which was translated from the French of Louis de Clairac and also Louis de Tousard's *American Artillerists Companion*, (3 vols., Philadelphia, 1809).

F. P. T.